PRIVATE EYE

70p

No. 773
Friday
2 Aug. '91

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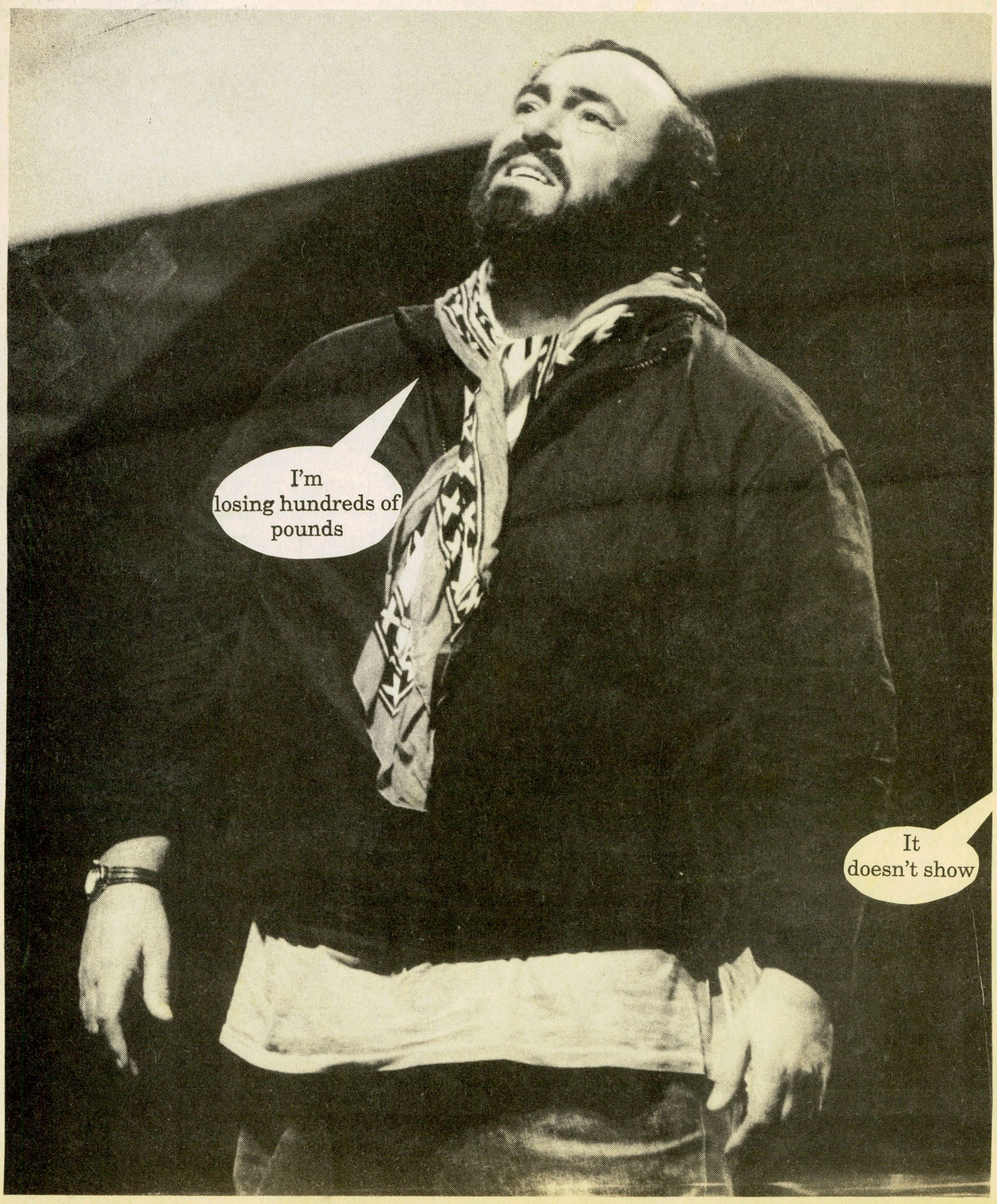

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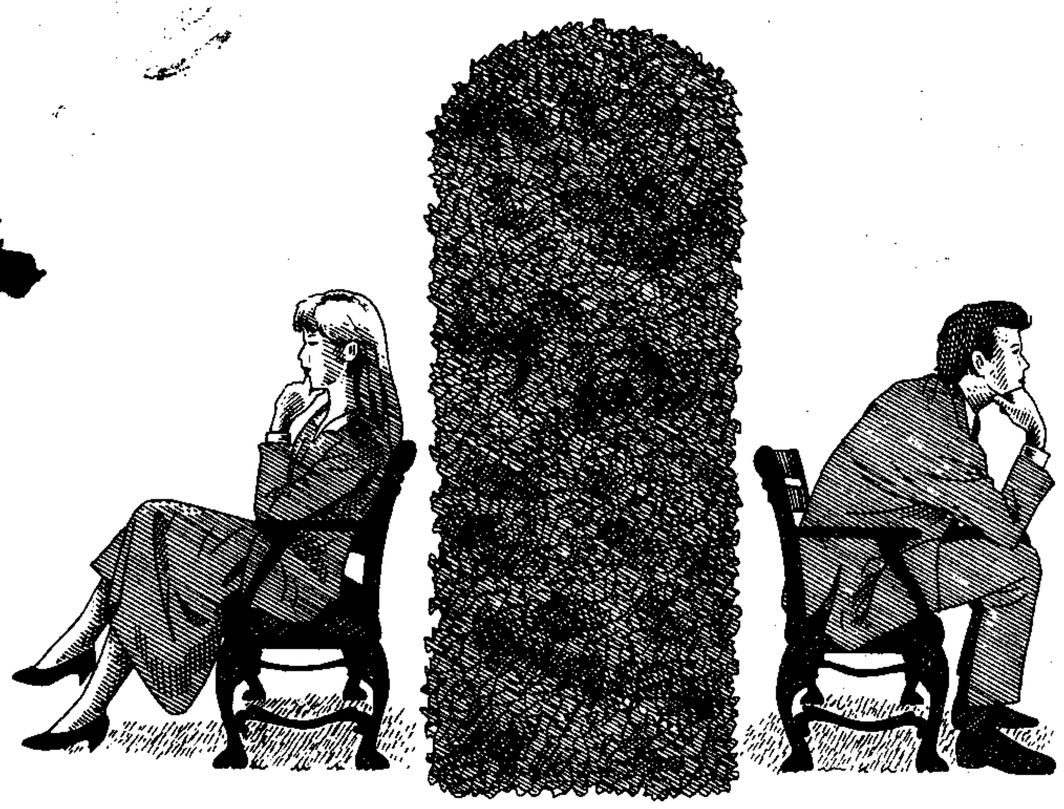

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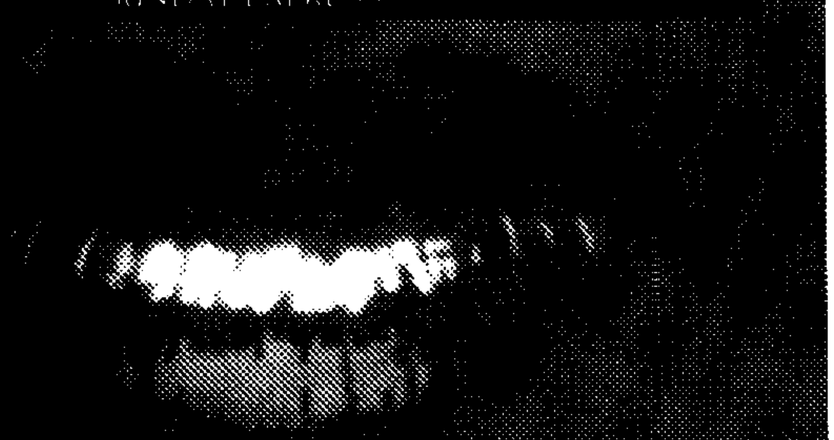

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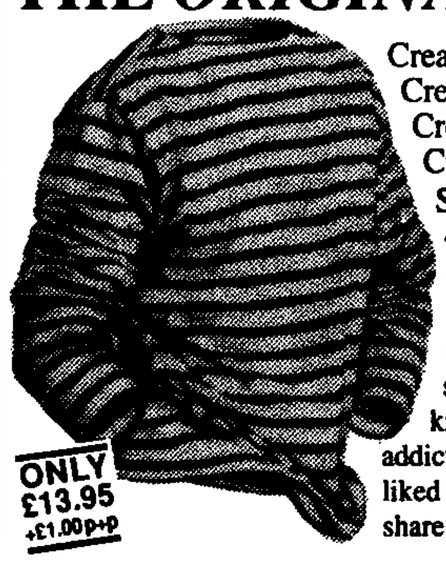

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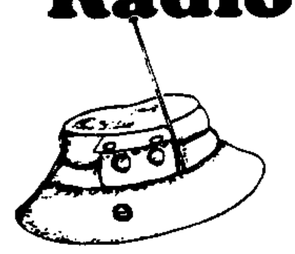

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Gnome

THE *Daily Gnome* has always been known for its balanced coverage of public affairs and, in particular, for its measured and responsible attitude to the economic life of the nation.

The news that the Chancellor, Mr Lamont, was due to make a statement concerning the economy was, therefore, received with the *Daily Gnome*'s normal unflappable calm.

When Mr Lamont made his announcement no one at Gnome House lost their head or panicked or over-reacted. Mr Lamont said that "the signs of recovery in the economy were not unencouraging".

This analysis was duly reported in the *Daily Gnome* under the following sober headlines which I would defend to the hilt on the basis that I wrote them (shurely "that I support the independent editorial line of the paper"? E.S.):

IT'S THE MAJOR MIRACLE!
THREE CHEERS FOR STORMIN' NORMAN LAMONT!
BOOM-TIME BRITAIN IS BACK!
YOU'VE NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD!
LOADSALUVLYLOLLY!
VOTE CONSERVATIVE

Let us hear no more about the so-called recession from the moaning minnies and whingeing willies who are merely determined to talk this country into a Labour Government (shurely "an unnecessarily prolonged period of financial retrenchment"? E.S.)

Lord Gnome
Daily Gnome
London
W1

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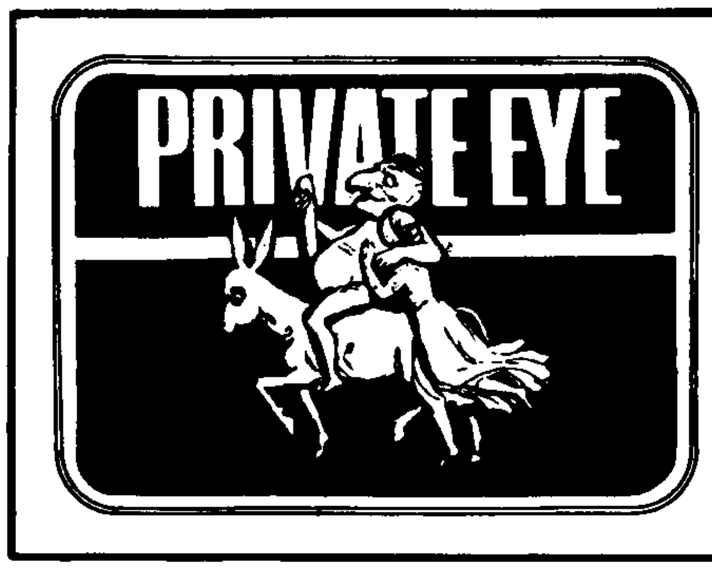


COLOUR SECTION

ONE OF THE more dramatic side-effects of the collapse of BCCI is that it will reopen the Irangate controversy in the United States with such force that the London origins of that scandal — and the involvement of the then vice-president, George Bush — will finally be exposed for all to see.

It will be stale buns for *Eye* readers, who know that the original plan to sell arms to Iran in exchange for the release of hostages (most notably the then head of the CIA in the Middle East, William Buckley) originated in London with a British CIA agent called Leslie Aspin.

Aspin was first instructed by CIA boss William Casey to put together a deal for selling TOW missiles to Iran. In 1985 he met Oliver North and Richard Secord, who were coordinating the deal for the CIA and the White House.

Leslie Aspin's key fellow-conspirator was an arms dealer called Ben Banerjee. He had a house in Buckinghamshire and a licence from the British Government to deal in arms. Aspin, Banerjee and North opened three special accounts in BCCI, Paris, and deposited millions of dollars to finance the deal. The Iranian letter of credit was to be transferred to Banerjee's personal bank, BCCI in Park Lane, London, by Michael Aspin, Leslie's brother. Michael A. also got a back-hander from BCCI of £5,000.

The Aspin deal eventually fell through and the CIA, with typical loyalty, decided to throw the police on both sides of the Atlantic off the scent by sacrificing the people who were trying to stitch the deal together. Consequently, in 1988 Michael Aspin (though not Leslie — he was a CIA agent and could not be sold out directly), a Lloyds insurance man called William Harper, a former colonel called Matson and an arms dealer from Camberley called John Taylor were charged with pretending to stitch up an arms deal with Iran.

They pleaded that the whole idea had been put to them by the US government — but this was laughed out of court. Leslie Aspin, who gave evidence, could not reveal his direct links with the CIA. So three of the four were convicted and sent to prison. Only one of them, Michael Aspin, is still there — writing angry letters about his frame-up from North Sea Camp, near Boston, Lincs.

Now, for the first time, the *Financial Times* (27 July — it did not name Aspin) and others are taking an interest in the Aspin story, without explaining its full significance. If Leslie Aspin's story is true, the Iran-Contra scandal started much earlier than the Tower Commission later reported, and its origins in 1985 take it right into the office of the then vice-president Bush.

The key link with that office was a man called Robert Sensi, who was chairman of Republicans Abroad, a campaign organisation whose chairman was Bush. Sensi was arrested in Britain and extradited to the United States on charges of fraud. He has been convicted of some of these, but somehow seems to have escaped going to prison. Sensi's involvement suggests that Bush was kept closely informed of the TOW missile deal and that his office was the very first to be involved in Iran-Contra.

PS: Three people in this story died of sudden heart attacks in 1990 — Leslie Aspin, Ben Banerjee and William Casey.

JOHN MAJOR'S first trial of strength with his own intelligence chiefs followed the broadcast on *World in Action* on 15 July of the revelations of one Robin Robison.

Robison worked with the Joint Intelligence Committee at the Cabinet Office and was so shocked by the activities of MI5 and MI6 that he decided to go public with allegations about both. Robison carried on where Peter Wright, Colin Wallace and Cathy Massiter left off, revealing that the security services are a law to themselves, and are cheerfully using the Government's enormous surveillance system to spy on peace campaigners, trade unionists and even the Government itself.

Robison took the argument further, alleging that the secret services have been spying on foreign governments, especially France and Germany, and have also been trying their hand, on behalf of the big British corporations, at a little commercial espionage on the side.

The revelations, which were forceful and direct and the first ever from someone in the Cabinet Office, were in clear breach of the Official Secrets Act 1989, whose central purpose was to silence people like Robison. He is a Quaker, and had decided to break the law deliberately and, if necessary, face the consequences in order to expose the outrageous and illegal behaviour of the security services. His revelations caused a number of anxious meetings at the Cabinet Office about which John Major was kept closely informed.

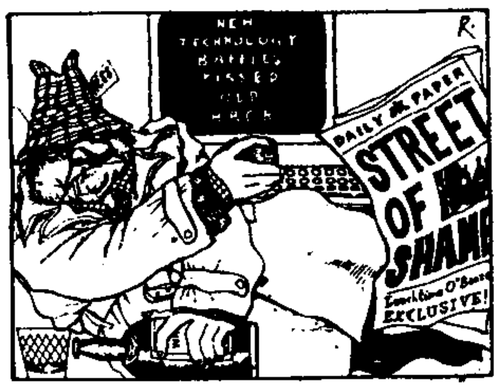
One obvious course was to prosecute Robison. Under the old Thatcher-Armstrong intelligence regime, there would have been no holding back: they would have gone for him just as they went for Sarah Tisdall (convicted), Clive Ponting (acquitted) and Peter Wright. But the new regime under Sir Robin Butler was more cautious. The prosecution of Wright had, it was considered, been disastrous. It had got worldwide publicity for the allegations of a fanatical crank whose memoirs would otherwise have been quickly forgotten. Thanks to the prosecutions, Wright's ill-written and uninformative book had sold millions of copies.

The decision was therefore taken to ignore the Robison disclosures, not prosecute him and, if any questions were asked, to murmur off the record that Robison is very young (27), very junior and very committed, and had obviously exaggerated what he saw into pure fantasy. This soft line, which was quickly endorsed by Major, caused consternation in the security services. If the Official Secrets Act, which they regard as their very own, were to be so openly flouted, how could their dirty deeds be protected in the future?

One result of this has been two articles in the *Sunday Express* by Barrie Penrose, who has joined the staff there after his sacking by Andrew Neill, editor of the *Sunday Times*. In his first article, Penrose repeated that "lawyers at the Treasury Solicitor's Office" are "expected to ask Scotland Yard if Mr Robison can be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act".

In fact, the decision not to prosecute has already been taken — far higher up than the Treasury Solicitors Office or Scotland Yard. But the Penrose articles (the second of which led the *Sunday Express* front page on 28 July) are indicative of a sustained counterattack by the boys from the backrooms who are determined the Wright fiasco should be repeated.

"This stinks – let's flog it to Iraq"



SUNSET TIMES **deputy editor, the bouffant-haired Lothario Ivan Fallon, has surpassed even himself in the grovel-and-slime stakes in recent weeks.**

First he objected to the review section running a feature on the fall and fall of Gerald Ronson which asked, not unreasonably, whether a crook of such magnitude should be shaking hands with the Queen Mum. The deranged Fallon came out with the immortal line: "This is nonsense. Anyone would think he's a criminal the way you've written about him."

More interesting has been Fallon's view of the BCCI scandal and the treatment of his Bank of England chums — particularly Brian Quinn, head of supervision.

Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill got it into his stormy head that the guilty men should be named and Quinn was firmly lined up for a drubbing — until, that is, Fallon got his hands on the copy and again worked his magic touch, describing Leigh-Pemberton and Quinn as living gods. When Brillo discovered Fallon's crime he bawled him out in conference.

Undaunted, Fallon is now plotting his next assault on any hack who dares to criticise any of his gruesome circle of friends — Lord White, Lord Sterling, Sir James Goldsmith, Conrad Blood, Tony O'Reilly, Michael Smurfitt, Robin Leigh-Pemberton, Lord Forte, etc etc.

THE DAY after the re-arrest of escaped rapist James Saunders, the "wolfman" of Broadmoor, most newspapers concentrated on the police constable who had caught him. But the London *Evening Standard* had a different priority: plugging the pub in Corscombe outside which the wolfman was nicked.

Its report included an amazing number of gratuitous references to the Fox Inn, plus many paragraphs of quotes from landlord Martyn Lee (who, it revealed, "is joint Master of the Cattistock Fox Hounds"), his girlfriend Nell Courtnay (sorry, "The Hon. Nell Courtnay") and Lee's 67-year-old mother, Sally. To cap it all, the *Standard* saw fit to print a photo of Martyn Lee and the Hon Nell.

The explanation is simple. As *Eye* readers will recall (see issue 769), Rory Knight Bruce of the *Standard* is regularly employed by Martyn Lee at the Fox Inn as a "celebrity barman". As soon as the wolfman was arrested, Lee telephoned the glad tidings to his chum Knight Bruce — who duly obliged with umpteen column inches of free publicity.

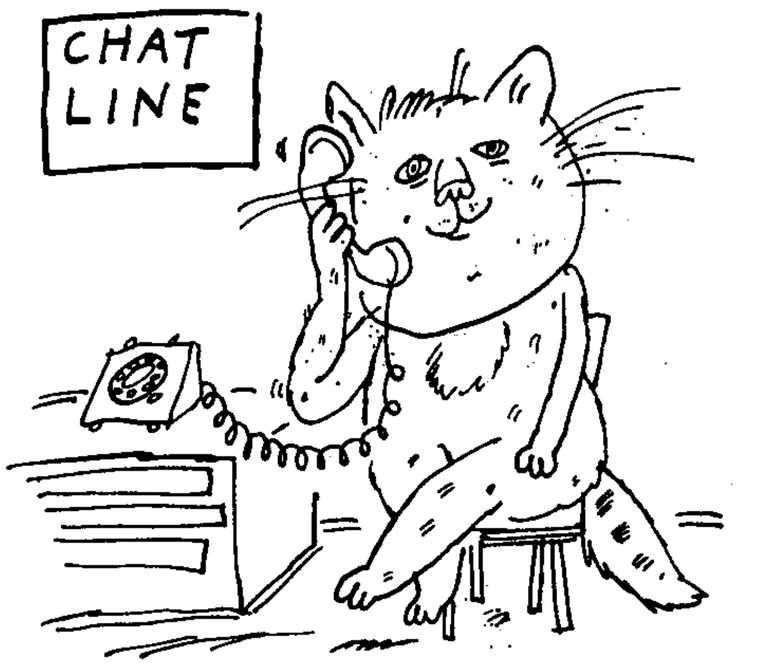
QUESTION: Which influential and highly respected City columnist who writes about the strengths and weaknesses of different currencies on a weekly basis in a whiter than white newspaper has recently lost his shirt (rumoured to be worth around £160,000) by punting on Deutsch Mark options while advising his readers, and more importantly, the money market boys to do the same?

Answers on a postcard, please.

COLLEAGUES of Tory backbencher Sir Teddy Taylor fear that he spent too long in the sun during his recent trip to Libya.

So incensed was he by the *Evening Standard*'s coverage of his visit to Gaddafi-land that he is taking the paper to the Press Complaints Commission on the novel grounds that the rag's report endangered world peace.

Sir Teddy also says the *Standard* was wrong to suggest that the £250,000 Libyan cheque in compensation for the death of police constable Yvonne Fletcher came from the mad colonel. The cheque actually came from the Libyan police force, says Sir Teddy, apparently imagining that the Libyan dictatorship allows scope for such unilateral acts of generosity by state agencies.



"Bonjour"

THE RECENT promotion of Mike "Two Jobs" Brown, from night editor to number three on the *Sunday Mirror*, has proved a mixed blessing.

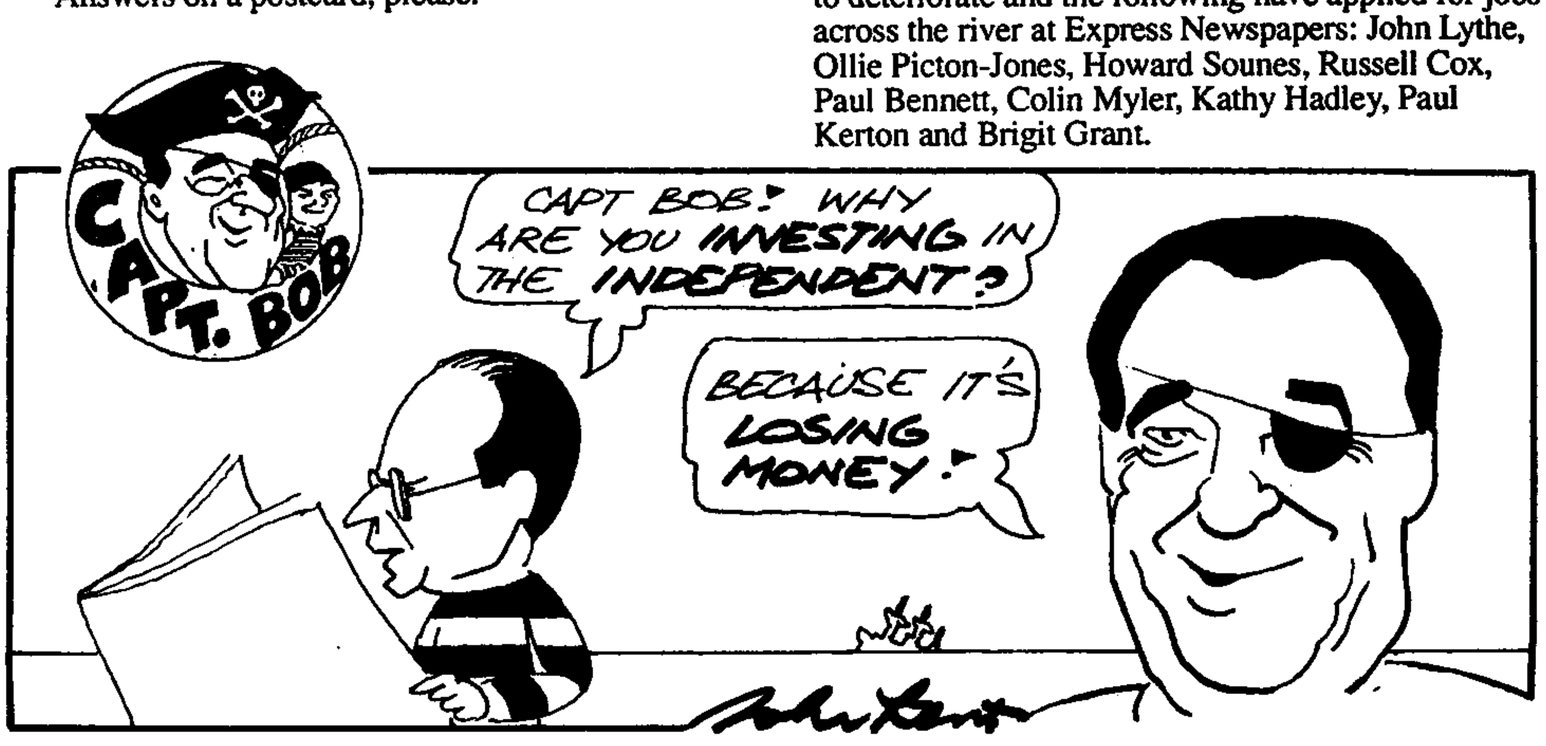
As night editor, Brown was paid £45,000 and so his new salary of £55,000 might seem a welcome pecuniary boost: in reality Brown has had to take a £10,000 pay cut.

The reason is that he was being paid £20,000 a year for working on his days off (Mondays) for the *Daily Mirror* (where he was paid through the advertising department under the name of Bryant). Because of this lucrative though tiring arrangement, he failed to do much work for the *Sunday Mirror* on Tuesdays. Now he will be obliged to turn up and the "Bryant" job will go.

Meanwhile, *Sunday Mirror* editor Bridget "Death" Rowe has been coming down heavily on staff. She has sent a memo to the underpaid secretaries complaining that they are taking too much time off through ill-health and saying that she wants them to show more commitment.

Rowe is working on a so-called "secret" project, setting up a TV listings magazine — yes, another one! — for Cap'n Bob, who intends to sell it independently. Sources upstairs at Holborn Circus say that if the *Sunday Mirror* continues to lose sales (it recently lost market share for the second time in three months), "Death" Rowe will be kicked sideways on to the listings mag.

Not surprisingly, morale among hacks continues to deteriorate and the following have applied for jobs across the river at Express Newspapers: John Lythe, Ollie Picton-Jones, Howard Sounes, Russell Cox, Paul Bennett, Colin Myler, Kathy Hadley, Paul Kerton and Brigit Grant.



JUST FANCY THAT

WHAT exactly was being stored in the offices of Hays Business Systems, destroyed by an awful fire on 7 July in which two firemen were killed?

One interesting answer came when a fire brigade officer, visiting the site after the fire, picked up what appeared to be a receipt from the Bank of Commerce and Credit International, which had only recently been closed down by the Bank of England amid allegations of global fraud.

Private Eye 772, 17 July 1991

EXCLUSIVE by TERRY PATTINSON and RAMSAY SMITH

DOCUMENTS concerning the fraud bank BCCI were burned in a warehouse blaze which killed two firemen, it was revealed last night.

Daily Mirror, 24 July 1991

WHILE Alan Bleasdale's *GBH* ended to mixed reviews, one unqualified fan was Derek Hatton who, temporarily rescued from the obscurity he so richly deserved, has been milking amoral media folk.

Wogan couldn't wait to give the pudgy spiv a platform to whinge about not being able to have a fair trial because everybody thinks the crook in *GBH* is based on him. Meanwhile, Robert Maxwell's *People* paid £4,000 for a picture of Hatton precisely because his twitches and tics bore an uncanny resemblance to *GBH*'s villain.

However, at Wapping the media schizophrenia was pronounced. Even though the *Sunset Times* had serialised Hatton's ultra-tedious memoirs, Andrew Neill's Insight Team (almost dead since *Death On the Rock*) is basking in the Digger's approbation for having so fearlessly followed *Private Eye* in exposing the great Trot plot (see Murkeyside *passim ad nauseam*).

To the consternation of the rest of Wapping, most political hacks and many MPs, *Toady* editor Martin Dunn continues to give Hatton the sort of space as interview subject and guest political columnist that is normally afforded a former Foreign Secretary or SDP leader.

Indeed, the speculation in the Commons Press Bar is that if *Toady* survives and Hatton is still "available" after his court case, he will be made the rag's political editor! More cynical hacks suggest that baby-faced Dunn and poseur Hatton simply have a common interest: both have discussed the affairs of Uganda with Fiona Wright, the Glenda Slagg of *Sunday Sport*.

BLUE-EYED boy Nigel Davidson's first day as managing director of IPC's Women's Magazine Group started with a bang.

Arriving at 7.15am to show up his staff, the first executive task he set himself was to break one of the buttons on his telephone. Taking out his handy managing director's screwdriver, his second task of the day was to take the phone to pieces. Here he discovered "an electronic device".

By the time other early-risers had started to drift into King's Reach Tower at around 8am, Davidson was storming from office to office with IPC's chairman, John Mellon, in tow. Onlookers were puzzled by furious shouts of "and here's another one, who could be doing this?", and were even more puzzled by his demand that they all dissect their phones there and then.

Even directorial office walls could not contain the frantic demands for the heads of office services and security to roll. No security chief being immediately available, Mellon went in search, clutching one of Davidson's devices, only to be met at the reception desk by ringing alarm bells and suspicious guards. The bugs turned out to be security tags, to prevent light-fingered employees from walking off with the company's office equipment.

By 8.15 all was quiet again and Davidson spent the rest of the day in sheepish silence.

JUST FANCY THAT

The Americans had shown that the Leadenhall Street branch of the BCCI had at least three front companies that were laundering and moving money for Abu Nidal. Although

Private Eye, 9 December 1988

ABU NIDAL, the world's most dangerous terrorist, used London branches of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) to help fund a decade-long terrorist campaign against Western targets.

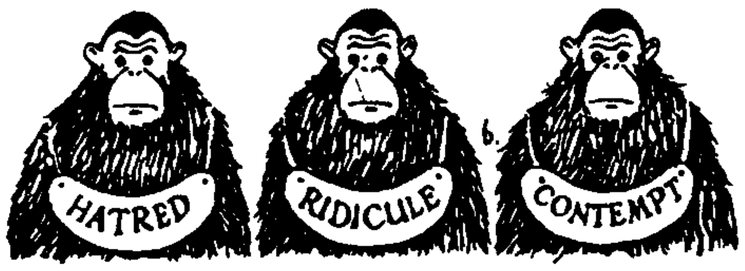
Sunday Times, 21 July 1991

LIBEL NEWS

NEW GROUND is likely to be broken in the world of libel following the issuing of writs by the junk food chain McDonalds against five members of an anarchist group called Greenpeace London.

McDonalds was infuriated by the circulation of leaflets criticising the origin of its products which were passed to customers outside well-known McDonalds eateries. Three of the five have agreed to apologise but the other two, who are penniless, plan to defend themselves.

The new ground to be broken is the suggestion by McDonald's that one of the defendants was guilty of "publishing" the alleged libel by being present at a meeting at which the leaflets were "made available". He did not print, publish or circulate the material, but was present at a meeting where it was passed round. If McDonalds succeeds in this unusual claim, several thousands more people every year could be added to the already far too long list of libel defendants.



CAP'N BOB's absurd recourse to law seems to know no bounds.

Following Jason Nissé's disclosure in the *Independent* that Peter Walker wouldn't, after all, become chairman of Maxwell Communications Corporation, the Cap'n issued no fewer than eight writs forbidding the hapless hack to even talk about him, let alone write about him.

Forgetful young Nissé went off to lunch on the day the writs arrived and was blabbing away along the lines of "Cap'n Bob is an Extremely Wonderful Person, etc etc." Imagine his surprise when he returned to the office to discover yet another legal missive from Maxwell. His spies had been seated at the next table to Nissé's during lunch.

THE *Daily Mail* has received a fantastically pompous solicitor's letter threatening libel proceedings over an article about Wentworth in Surrey's gin-and-Jag belt.

In the article, features hackette Jane Kelly wrote the following innocuous words: "Older residents remember when... one's neighbours were professional people of quality, rather than game show hosts."

Kevin Bays, of Messrs Wright Webb Syrett, has written to the *Mail* on behalf of one of the residents, the distinguished game show host Mr Bruce "Nice to see you, to see you nice" Forsyth.

According to Bays's letter, "these words clearly suggest that our client is someone who lacks the qualities to be expected of a resident of Wentworth and that his conduct and behaviour is such that he is not a fit and proper person to live in a respectable area... Our client is justifiably proud of his achievements and his personal and professional reputation and is not prepared to allow this personal attack and slur on his character to go unchallenged and uncorrected."

This nonsense was evidently written by a professional person of quality.

THE PROSPECT of a wave of national rail strikes, akin to those of 1989, is clouding Labour hopes of a general election victory.

While the Great Kinnock Purge may be taming militancy elsewhere in the Labour movement, militants in the unions, notably the RMT (as the NUR Is now called) are still confident of having their way.

The NUR's structure has remained basically unchanged since the formation of the four mainline regional railway companies in 1923. The union executive is paid on a full-time basis and is continuously on hand in London, where the general-secretary is at its beck and call. It has become increasingly dominated by militants, and the present general-secretary, Jimmy Knapp, whom not even his best friends would describe as a strong character, is no match for them.

Rail strikes this summer were only averted because the arbitrators' cards were marked to give in on the union's pay demand. By holding out on next year's pay claim, the Government should have no difficulty in engineering a series of strikes for May and June.

PANIC is breaking out at the Institute of Economic Affairs, the Thatcherite think-tank which enjoys all the tax advantages of being a charity but would lose them if the Charity Commissioners could prove it was just a front for the Tory Party (*Eyes passim*).

The commissioners have launched an official inquiry into the real purpose of the IEA, whose chief executive, Graham Mather, and other officers are hoping against hope that none of the commissioners comes across the IEA's invitation to a top people's reception at the Queen Elizabeth Conference Centre, Westminster, held on 4 July.

The speaker was a Mr Norman Lamont, who is believed to be linked somehow to the Conservative Party.

VIEWERS of BBC by-election programmes will be deprived of the cuddly, chuckling personality of SLD president Des Wilson if Tory chairman Chris Patten and Labour's campaign manager Jack Cunningham have anything to do with it.

On the night of the Monmouth by-election there was a terrible spat between Patten and Cunningham, with Patten accusing Cunningham and Labour of lying during the campaign. But evidently both men found Wilson's reaction more irritating than anything else (he mocked them mercilessly for their childish name-calling) because they have now insisted that future appearances by them will depend on the BBC finding an MP or peer to act as spokesman instead of Wilson.

Since the SLD intends to give Wilson an extremely high profile in its general election campaign, the BBC's Rosaleen Hughes is going to have a tough time persuading Patten and Cunningham to drop their attempt at blackmail.

COULD Sir Geoffrey Howe share with the nation his thoughts on the BCCI collapse?

When he was Foreign Secretary the Mogadon Man was shown a specially commissioned report on BCCI which was also shown to the Bank of England with a view to their taking some action. It concerned Abu Nidal, terrorism, etc (see *Eyes* passim), but the report got the traditional "Dead Sheep" treatment and nothing more was ever heard of it.

WHILE Labour may have won the controversial Walton by-election, the real political fun is only just beginning.

Once Kinnock's men were assured of victory, the focus switched from getting out the Labour vote, to turfing out the Trots. Thus it was that would-be David Baileys like John Evans MP and Nev Bann, prospective parliamentary candidate for Mossley Hill, tried to compile photographic dossiers of Militant canvassers.

While their attempts failed, other Kinnockites were more successful. At one point they even had a ladder up against the back wall of the Trot committee rooms from which snaps of Mahmoud coven meetings were taken. Some 130 names are now up for expulsion on the basis of the evidence.

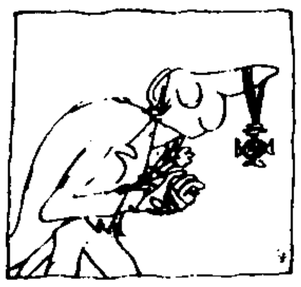
Militant, however, seem to have been as keen on photographic manipulation as their opponents. Jackie Smith, a left Labour councillor, was cut out of an election photograph in good Stalinist tradition — leaving her shadow clearly visible in the left hand corner. Her crime was to take the wrong side in Militant's pre-election debate about whether to field a candidate and accurately forecast the disastrous results.

Tony Jennings, the "Broad Left's" leader, was equally furious at being edged out of the candidacy by Militant's machine. But shed no tears for Jennings: at the height of Hatton's halcyon era for city chauffeurs he was heard denouncing David Blunkett for arriving at a meeting in a chauffeur driven car. He seems to have expected the guide dog to drive.

On the Kilfoyle team, meanwhile, they were equally leery of allowing Keva "Gobsmacked" Coombes and Bob Parry, the peripatic member for Liverpool Riverside, to canvass. Keva was relegated to folding leaflets and Parry to distributing them. Doubtless their low profile role helped Kilfoyle to victory!

'Backbiter'

O.B.N.



Sir — I was delighted to read of the award to David English. It was my privilege to be a marketing director of the *Sketch & Mail* during those exciting years of preparation, conversion and merger...

I am sure he would agree it was a team effort, though doubtless he will reveal that some of the team seemed to be playing against us! However, it is quite certain that the powerhouse, sometimes leading, sometimes driving, but always encouraging with his great sense of humour, was the man himself, David English...

In his capacity as editor-in-chief, his vital blood transfusion to the *Mail on Sunday* will also be acknowledged by those "in the know". As you so report, "a man whose record is unlikely ever to be matched".

BERT IRVINE
Letter to UK Press Gazette

Submitted by Andrew Bond.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

Grovel

I HEAR that the financially-embarrassed royals have found an ingenious way to supplement their cash deposits.

The Queen's solicitor, Sir Matthew Farrer, has arranged that any hack or author wanting to pen a book about Brenda or her family and who needs help from a royal or a member of a royal household should get in touch with Michael Sissons, the increasingly pompous and dogmatic chairman and managing director of literary agents Peters, Fraser & Dunlop.

Lord Sissons, a fervent MCC wallah, will only permit the author to publish a volume of hagiography if an agreed percentage of the royalties (sic) is ferried his way. The cash will be employed to prop up the fabric of certain royal homes. All this is tough for courtier-like authors of books about the royals as they are at present about the only growth area of British publishing.

MY OLD chum the bouncing Czech is moving up in the world judging by impressive new appointments he has made at his astonishingly good newspaper, *The European*.

The most exciting are two humble office juniors, Stephen and Rachel Kinnock, whose father is none other than the prime minister in waiting. While Rachel works on *Le Pisse-pauvre*'**s picture desk returning photographs to agencies, Stephen, who speaks French and Spanish and wants eventually to become an interpreter, writes feature articles.**

Stephen, I gather, is unable to type — unusual, perhaps, for a feature writer, but apparently no hindrance to employment with Cap'n Bob. Conveniently, Stephen can dictate his articles to gorgeous, pouting "Dee" Jackson.

The young Kinnocks are not the only high profile newcomers: the Cap'n has also dispensed his largesse across the Channel to snap up the emminent Lionel "Napoleon" Stoleru, France's former secretary of state for immigration, as the newspaper's economics editor at a very reasonable salary of £200,000 a year.

Stoleru has the task of editing of the renamed business, economics and finance section, and appears to be adopting an unusual technique. Much of it is done from Paris, with orders being barked down the telephone to the section's previous editor, the hapless Maggie Pagano, who is in turn spied upon by a mysterious young man called Fabrice who reports directly to Napoleon.

I am sure the Cap'n knows what he is doing.

● *ANYONE in search of something lively to read on holiday should hasten to the high court and snatch a copy of the Statement of Claim in the forthcoming case of Lonrho plc and Others vs. Mohamed Fayed and Others.*

One of its contentions is that Fayed and/or his colleagues wrote an unpublished book about Rowland which contained "fatuous and gross allegations of homosexual liaisons with other Lonrho directors". Equally fascinating is paragraph 25, which is simply headed "Lavatory Seats".

In January and February 1991, it alleges, Mohamed Fayed "conspired with person or persons unknown to manufacture a number of high quality lavatory seats having printed around the seat in large letters 'I shit on Tiny Rowland' ". Eight of these seats, it continues, were given to an enemy of Tiny's "with instructions to sell them at a car boot sale near the home of Mr Rowland, in the hope of humiliating, embarrassing and injuring Mr Rowland and his family".

I trust that this grave accusation will be vigorously defended.

Pseuds Corner

1991, the year of the bicentenary of Mozart's death, has already been celebrated with due devotion and even mindless awe. Here was the supreme musical genius, whose works may be analysed by the expert without elucidating its true nature, and whose life has been presented so often, in book and in film, that it would be foolish to tell the story yet again. Anthony Burgess's tribute has an ironic component. He sets his scene mostly in heaven, from which Saddam Hussein's guns can be faintly heard. He splits himself up into several warring historical personages, initiates discussions which get nowhere except a region where an understanding of the nature of music (not just Mozart's) may conceivably begin to dawn. Mozart brings solace to our tattered lives but he also brings bewilderment.

Burgess's attempt to understand Mozart is made through celestial dialogue, a Stendhalian effort at turning Symphony No. 40 into fiction, an opera libretto; and fragments of a film script join with the author's own schizophrenia to answer the unanswerable.

Hutchinson Publishers' Catalogue

The other day I had an oddly Proustian little epiphany...

GILBERT ADAIR
Guardian

...I view disco, at its serious best, as a dark, grand music with roots in African earth-cult. Her [Madonna's] command of massive, resonant bass-lines, which she heard in the funky dance clubs of Detroit and New York, has always impressed me. As an Italian Catholic, she uses them liturgically: she sensed the buried pagan religiosity in disco.

CAMILLE PAGLIA
Independent on Sunday

The conceptual changes demanded by feminist theology are so great that few churches have dared tackle them. One that has, however, is St Hilda's Community, which meets in east London in a Methodist church, safely out of the jurisdiction of the Church of England...

...Last Sunday at St Hilda's, a new version of the creation myth was read: "The earth was formless and empty. God paused. Her brooding spirit hovered, restless, over the face of the waters, contemplating the indissoluble cord binding her to the earth. God loved the fruit of Her womb."

Guardian

Photographer Oliviero Toscani had a free hand once again to create the images [for a Benetton ad campaign]. They are: a newborn baby, with umbilical cord attached; a priest and a nun kissing; a roll of white toilet paper; leaves floating in

oil; two children, one white and cherubic, the other black and with the suggestion of devil's horns in her hair. Finally, unprovocative and prettily, a zebra with a parrot on its back.

Creative Review

CONTRIBUTORS: Anon, Michael Cregan, Paul James Gillooly, E. Strobes, Anon.

£10 paid for entries

TENTH ANNIVERSARY

TO JULIAN Barnes's delightful home in Dartmouth Park to celebrate publication of his new novel, *Talking It Over*.

Among the guests is my old friend Jaci Stephen, the *Daily Mail*'s sex columnist, who is in typically high spirits. At the end of the evening, as Barnes is standing on his front doorstep bidding his guests farewell, Jaci breezes past him and subjects him to one of the most violent goosings I have ever been privileged to witness, and then bounds down the steps and dives into a taxi with novelist William Boyd and his wife Susan.

Suddenly she remembers that she has left her handbag in the house, so she bounds up to the threshhold once again, stretches out her hand towards an alarmed Barnes and exclaims: "Now I'm going to do the front." Barnes has not been seen in public since.

IT WILL BE a long hot summer for the cast of Sir Peter Hall's production of *The Rose Tattoo* **at the Playhouse Theatre, all thanks to the theatre's owner, Jeffrey Archer, the internationally acclaimed theatrical benefactor.**

Jeffrey — a man who boasts that he pays more in income tax than the entire Cabinet receives in salaries — is for some reason obliging cast members to change in the boiler room. I do hope this is not because the robust entrepreneur has done anything silly — like sell off the dressing rooms.

MY OLD imbibing partner Alexander Chancellor, editor of *The Indescribablyboring Magazine*, was recently lunched by Max "Hitler" Hastings, who wants to lure him back to the Torygraph group.

The lunch went well and Hitler was confident he could win Chancellor over. But towards the end of the meal he felt it necessary to mention a ticklish subject.

"There's just one problem, Alexander," and at this Hastings tapped his wine glass with his knife, indicating that Chancellor's fondness for the grape might have to be somewhat curtailed.

At this point, having heard the tap on the glass, a waiter approached the table and inquired whether there was anything the two gentlemen needed.

"Another bottle, please, my good man!" said Chancellor with a chuckle.

● *POOR old Pratt Dumpster. The notoriously thin-skinned gossip hack has got into a terrible tizzy over an article about him in the Telegraph.*

The piece, in the Peterbore Column, claimed that Dumpster was trying to have Evening Standard hack Rory Knight-Bruce removed from his job at the Londoner's Diary

In fact, Dumpty was so shirty that he sent an irate fax to Max Hastings, the editor of the Telegraph, which made some rather straightforward threats.

If Hitler allowed these unfounded calumnies to appear in his paper, then he, Dumpty, would feel obliged to start writing about Hastings's marriage.

What a charmer he is.

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

FIRST A lament, then outrage. One of the secret pleasures known to real Londoners was to go from the Strand to the Embankment by Hungerford Lane: a hidden, ancient, almost subterranean street omitted on most maps.

It began at the top end of Craven Street, then ran steeply down to the original bank of the Thames — where once stood the notorious blacking-factory in which the young Charles Dickens worked — before turning under the arches of Charing Cross Station to reach Villiers Street.

A few years ago, Hungerford Lane was still cobbled and a curious survival of ancient Westminster. When the great Victorian monster of Charing Cross Station replaced the beautiful Hungerford Market in the 1860s, it was allowed to remain cringing beneath Hawkshaw's giant brick arches; to follow its strange, intimidating path was a fascinating exercise in urban archaeology, for it lay even below Craven Passage, which itself ran underneath the railway terminus.

No longer. First, its upper end was spoiled by the erection of that hideous office block in the Strand with a fatuously overdeveloped Casson Mansard (designed, in fact, by the eponymous architect's own firm). Then came the redevelopment of Charing Cross Station, lately completed; the raising of a colossal post-Modern pile of metal and marble over the tracks.

Now, although monstrously big, this is by no means bad and we must be grateful to the architect, Terry Farrell, for restoring the level route from the Strand to the South Bank which the Hungerford Market and Suspension Bridge briefly allowed before being swept sway by the South Eastern Railway. But Mr Farrell did not, apparently, notice Hungerford Lane. For no longer is it a through route, as great doors seal off the car park under the arches which used to be a right-of-way. Worse, perhaps, is the fact that great concrete columns now smash down into this forgotten thoroughfare and that the cobbles have gone.

But it is still worth walking down what is now a cul-de-sac, for it allows inspection from below of the tall backs of the Georgian houses in Craven Street. And here is the outrage, for the backs are new because many of these houses have been modernised to death in the last year: their original interiors ripped out, their facades tarted up, their authentic character extinguished — all without listed building consent. This ought to be a public scandal.

Craven Street was a real piece of Georgian London: another of the ancient streets running down from the Strand to the old bank of the Thames lined with good ordinary terraced houses — many with fine interiors. The upper ranges were early Georgian and laid out by Flitcroft in the 1730s; the lower houses dated from the end of the 18th century.

Heinrich Heine and Benjamin Franklin lodged here at various times; for a long time, the north-eastern side of the street was engagingly, if worryingly, shabby. This was because it was owned by British Railways — a legacy, no doubt, of Victorian plans to enlarge Charing Cross Station. Unfortunately, they are shabby no longer, because three years ago British Rail sold all these houses (save one) to Tarmac, the road construction company, and Messrs Tarmac have "restored" half of them as modern offices.

It seems to me that to allow Tarmac to acquire precious, listed Georgian houses is as responsible an act as, say, employing a convicted child-molester as baby-sitter. The consequence is that Nos 37-42 Craven Street have been gutted. Original panelling and joinery has been flung into skips and the fine timber staircase in No.40 has been removed. The architects employed — Jestico & Whiles: a firm with little experience of working with historic buildings — seem to have been incapable of controlling Tarmac's workmen.

An inspector from English Heritage complained — and was ignored. So why hasn't English Heritage exercised its powers and taken enforcement action, or, indeed, taken Tarmac to court? There seems little point in having historic building legislation if it is not enforced; little point in listing buildings if they can be wrecked and gutted with impunity. What on earth is English Heritage for if it will not fight for precious buildings like those in Craven Street? And what have the conservation officers of the City of Westminster been doing? Is big, well-connected Tarmac Ltd above the law? If so, why?

But this is not the end of the story. Next to No 36 with its plaque to Benjamin Franklin (owned and neglected by a useless trust, although it is highly likely that the great American in fact lived in a house on the opposite side of the street), there remains the lower terrace, Nos 25-34 Craven Street, now awaiting its fate. This includes the end house with a double bow-fronted side which overlooked the Thames before the Embankment was built. Are all these also to be gutted and wrecked as historic buildings by Tarmac? And will vacillating, politically-persecuted and demoralised English Heritage continue to turn a blind eye and concentrate on marketing souvenirs? We shall see.

'Piloti'

Sally Deedes

THE WORLD'S "favourite" airline, British Airways, announced recently that it is to lay off 2,000 employees due to the general unprofitability of its services and its failure to attract passengers.

To Tom Heritage and his fiancée — both of whom are disabled — BA's failure to attract passengers comes as no surprise after the couple attempted to have a spring break in Amsterdam courtesy of Lord King.

Being inexperienced travellers they rang Heathrow two days in advance to ask British Airways what time they should check in. They were told to arrive an hour before departure and so they left Essex — their point of departure — in good time. As luck would have it there train was delayed and they arrived at the check-in desk of Terminal 4 40 minutes before take-off — at 5.50 for a 6.30 plane.

They joined a short but very slow-moving queue and arrived at the head of it at 6 o'clock. The official checked in their bags very slowly, and then told them they would not be allowed to board the plane. When asked why not, he said that the plane was now boarding and no one was allowed on.

Mr Heritage pointed out, not unreasonably, that since the bags had been checked in, he and his fiancée could also be registered. With that austere pleasure so often adopted by minor officials, they were told "no" and referred to the reservation desk 400 metres away.

The attendant there was equally adamant that they should not take the flight for which they had paid. Recommendations that they try a KLM or British Midlands flight later that evening were no help since both were inundated with stand-by requests and their tickets were non-transferable.

By this time their original flight had taken off and they went back to the British Airways desk and spoke to the commercial manager. Could they have a refund? He told them that they had not read the small print. Not only were the tickets non-transferable, but they were also non-refundable. They could try for a flight the next day but again there was no guarantee they would be able to get on it.

Totally dispirited they returned to Essex at around midnight and caught the Harwich ferry to Holland the following morning rather than risk further miseries at the hands of BA.

Normal practice — confirmed by the Consumers' Association — is that as a rule airlines let people board planes right until the last moment. But not in this instance. Last month Mr Heritage wrote to Lord King explaining that his treatment hardly merited the accolade of "The World's Favourite Airline". No reply has been made — and British Airways has lost another two passengers!

GULF NEWS

THE Government's treatment of reservists called up to serve in the Gulf has been less than entirely honourable.

Battle Casualty Reserves (BCRs) have been suffering from many of the same traumatic symptoms as regular soldiers, but without any kind of support structure to assist them. And in some cases where the army promised to "top up" their army pay to the level of civilian pay, the promise has not been kept. Indeed one BCR who has written to the *Eye* was promoted to the rank of captain on the day of call-up, yet the army refused to pay a captain's salary, even though this person was the only nurse in a post-op surgical ward with any experience.

Personnel who served at 205 General Hospital, Riyadh, also have a particular grievance. The Saudi government paid the British army considerable sums of money that were passed on to troops as "water money", a bonus worth roughly £20 per person per week. Of all the personnel in field hospitals, only those at 205 General Hospital failed to receive their "water money". It was apparently paid to the administration of the hospital but not passed on.

The Army Pay Office says this was an "in theatre" decision and that it has no jurisdiction in the matter, although other sources suggest there is currently an investigation into the financial administration of 205 General Hospital.

TV EYE

Sex Now (LWT)

James Randi — Psychic Investigator (Granada)

SUNDAY tabloid newspapers — most notably the *News Of The World* — have always understood the profitability of stories about sex or the paranormal. Or, better still, sex *and* the paranormal: Poltergeist Made The Earth Move For Me. Television, of course, has less salacious priorities.

Well, perhaps it is just the silly season but the two most talked-about and reviewed programmes of the moment include one — LWT's bonkumentary *Sex Now* — about intercourse in the 90s and one — Granada's *James Randi—Psychic Investigator* — about that other kind of bumping in the night. Perhaps those frequent warnings about tabloid television should be taken more seriously.

Sex Now, hosted by Yvonne Roberts, employs the oldest tabloid prophylactic of all: investigative journalism as an excuse for a bit of dirty talk. All the quasi-academic apparatus is there — graphs, charts, newsreel footage — but the information revealed tends towards the general: a graphic will pompously reveal that young women in the 1960s were more sexually liberated than the generation before them. This was about as exciting as someone taking off their clothes to expose another set underneath.

But the statistics were simply a cover-on for the real turn-on: what Yvonne Roberts called "intimate sexual diaries" — bonk-books kept by viewers over a period of 12 days. It was stressed that names had been changed and that the people we were seeing in dramatised extracts from the diaries were actors. Understandably, this got you going, but these precautions scarcely seemed necessary in the first sequence, in which two grey-heads ambled around the garden before a sandwich lunch. Were they going to do it on the table, like Jack Nicholson and Jessica Lange? No. On voiceover, the "wife" said that they hadn't known much at the beginning but they had got better at it. Amazingly, she revealed that she and her husband were 50. The stooped old wrecks impersonating them for television suggested that *Sex Now* is made by very young people.

But the star turn-on was "Susan", a student. She produced the kind of dirty talk the programme was after: "There's a piece of music by Neneh Cherry which reminds me of my orgasm... sometimes I wish I could be orgasming all the time..." She spoke of masturbating with a vibrator and, being between partners, "needing a good fuck at the moment". The camera showed the "Susan" actress stretched out on her bed in a dressing gown, that piece of Neneh Cherry on the soundtrack.

Typically of the programme, the scene revealed nothing about contemporary sexuality but will have given many of LWT's late-night audience a helping hand with their own sexual explorations.

James Randi — Psychic Investigator is another attempt to have it both ways. Randi had a reputation for sarcasm and rigour in pursuit of shamans but his first British show — on mediums — demonstrated a terror of giving offence ("Now, you make up your own mind") which suggested that Granada Television, the makers, were worried Doris Stokes might be an ex-officio member of the ITC franchise-awarding committee.

This week Randi took on astrologers and, thankfully, showed less interest in being fair. An experiment was set up in which a standard City analyst and an astro-analyst (one who is guided by the stars) played the markets with an imaginary £10,000 each. The zodiac broker was burned while the straight man made a killing. A casting of star charts for 12 long-married couples demonstrated that they were all incompatible. Challenged, the astrologer lamely claimed that this proved that "people can get on with people who are incompatible with them."

Yet, even here, Randi didn't follow up by asking her what, if this was true, was the point of astro-romantic projections other than to allow the canny to make money from the credulous. Later, the fact that Ronald Reagan employed an astrologer was played only for jokes when there was an opportunity for journalism. What was Ron's chart on the day he was shot? What was Nancy's on the day Kitty Kelley's book came out? Accusing psychics of entertainment pretending to be something deeper, Randi is pulling exactly the same trick on his viewers. He remains, though, the most grotesquely watchable presenter since Loyd Grossman. Randi may not be paranormal, but he isn't very normal either.

'Square Eyes'

"How would you like to be flown to Hollywood and appear on WOGAN via satellite, sir?"

MEDIA NEWS

TEN years ago, Thames TV broadcast a notorious *TV Eye* programme called "The Last Round-Up" which earned it a severe rebuke from the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (BCC) for making untrue claims which endangered the safety of Czech dissidents. The hack who made the programme — which swiftly became known as *TV Lie* — was Julian Manyon. (See *Eyes* from the 1980s *passim*.)

Now Manyon is asking the BCC to reopen the case because of "new information" which he claims to have about Jan Kavan, a former dissident who used to run the Palach Press in London, but is now an MP in the Czechoslovak parliament.

Kavan helped Manyon with the programme — which showed an attempt to smuggle a vanload of dissident literature into Czechoslovakia — but subsequently complained that he had been traduced. In particular, he denied Manyon's allegation that the van had carried names and addresses of dissidents in "Jan Kavan's secret organisation" and that this careless act had led to the arrest of 32 Czech dissidents.

Manyon later said that his sources for the story were Kavan and Leopold Unger, Brussel's correspondent of the *Herald Tribune*. But both Kavan and Unger denied telling Manyon anything of the sort. The Broadcasting Complaints Commission found against Manyon.

Earlier this year, Manyon saw a chance to avenge himself: a parliamentary commission in Prague suggested that Kavan had had some contact with the Czech secret police in the late 1960s. Though the charge was vigorously contested by Kavan, Manyon flew to Prague and began digging for dirt. Since then, he has made at least half a dozen visits to Czechoslovakia.

Armed with sworn statements from a few old enemies of Kavan, he has now demanded that the BCC reopen the case. The BCC points out that it can only reconsider its adjudication if Manyon proves that the information on which it was based was false.

Manyon's time-consuming and expensive forays into Prague have infuriated his boss, *This Week* editor Paul Woolwich, who wasn't prepared to waste thousands of pounds merely to pursue an ancient grudge. But this hasn't hampered the perfidious hack: he went over Woolwich's head to Barrie "Off" Sales, the veteran Thames executive who was implicated with Manyon in the original *TV Lie* debacle. He, naturally, is only too pleased to finance any attempt to salvage his reputation.

Other hacks at *This Week* are now being dragged into the feud between Manyon and Woolwich. A researcher, Lois Lipman, returned to the office late one evening to find Woolwich making phone calls in funny accents praising that week's episode of the programme. The following day, the station's "duty log" recorded that many complimentary calls had been received from viewers about the latest *This Week*. Putting two and two together, Lipman told Manyon, who gleefully recorded the incident in his desk diary — where it was found by a secretary who then informed Woolwich.

Woolwich accused Manyon of keeping a dossier on him. Manyon replied that he wanted a note of the affair "for my forthcoming memoirs". Meanwhile, Woolwich denied that he had rung the duty officer to praise his own programme. The calls overheard by Lipman, he explained, had been "to a friend".

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"HELLO, LICENCE PAYERS — I'M GOING TO BE THE NEXT DG!"
BIRT Contract
THE ROVERS REPEAT
"WHY?"
"BECAUSE OF MY MISSION TO EXPLAIN"
"OK...
EXPLAIN HOW SOMEONE LIKE YOU DESERVES TO BE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE BBC?"
"Trebles all round!"
Kleenex
"Er...Pass"
KenKyne

HACK WATCH No 5: Bernard Ingham

BERNARD INGHAM may have been "the best press secretary in the world", as Margaret Thatcher claimed, but as a journalist he has never been a great success.

Indeed the reason he went into Whitehall in the first place — as press officer to the old Prices and Incomes Board in 1967 — was that he had been passed over for promotion at the *Guardian*. Fourteen years on, he has returned to his original trade — this time in the exalted role of weekly columnist at the *Daily Express*.

The paper's editor, Nick Lloyd, was always one of Thatcher's most assiduous courtiers. Last year he hired John Ingham, Bernard's son, as the *Express*'s diplomatic correspondent. Now, fortified by a knighthood in Thatch's resignation honours list, Sir Nick has found room for "barmy Bernie" himself.

After two months in the job, the limitations of Ingham's repertoire are becoming painfully apparent. As he can't help reminding us, he has only two selling points: that he worked for (and worships) Thatch; and that he is a professional Yorkshire-bore in the grim tradition of Michael Parkinson and Roy Hattersley. For the benefit of those who don't read the *Daily Express* (i.e. almost everyone), here are the "highlights" so far:

30 May: "It has been my great privilege and good fortune," he reminds us, "to work for... Margaret Thatcher."

Yorkshire note: "Ever heard of the Two Ferrets at Hebden Bridge? If not, you haven't lived... I invented this pub in my West Yorkshire home town when I was Mrs Thatcher's press secretary."

6 June: Ruminating on superstition, he reveals that "I worked for a Prime Minister who was born on the 13th and married on the 13th." No prizes for guessing her name.

Yorkshire note: "As a cub reporter I covered pilgrimages by Swiss exiles to the Hebden Valley."

13 June: Praises — guess who? — Mrs Thatcher for her "historic" achievement, which was "to halt and reverse Britain's decline and to raise our standing in the world..."

No Yorkshire, just for once.

20 June: Notes the chagrin Ted Heath must feel "when he contemplates the Thatcher years which he now vainly tries to denigrate with dismissals of her legacy..."

Yorkshire note: Ingham has two things in common with Arthur Scargill. "First, I'm sure we share great pride in being West Riding men... Second, we both possess a pair of clogs."

27 June: Summit time. "One of the compensations arising from Mrs Thatcher's loss of office last November was that I was spared attending my 32nd Euro summit..."

Yorkshire note: "Am I, this week, the only one awaiting news of a generous, out-of-court, no-liability payment by the Yorkshire miners to the South Yorkshire police...?"

4 July: An historic week: no Thatcher. Instead, a long piece about Yorkshire cricket: "I don't know what sport is coming to... Those old Yorkshire bowlers who could pitch a ball on to a tanner won't just be turning in their graves — they'll be spinning. And over Yorkshire CC, too..." etc etc.

11 July: End of South Africa's sporting isolation. Who should get the credit? Mrs Thatcher, of course, whose stand against sanctions "won us unique influence over the South African government..."

Yorkshire note: "I am utterly and irrevocably against any move by Yorkshire County Cricket Club to ditch the hallowed rule that allows only sons born or brought up in the county to play for it."

18 July: Another summit. "One of the banes of international gatherings — at least in Europe — is their chronic late starts. Mrs Thatcher made a habit of shaming everyone else by turning up on time — and raring to go..."

Yorkshire note: "...beside the lake on York University's beautiful campus..."

25 July: Disapproves, for anti-Kraut reasons, of choice of Munich for the next G7 summit. "I doubt whether the world's leaders... would be going there if Mrs Thatcher were still in office..."

Yorkshire note: Reminisces about "West Riding 'Wakes Weeks' during the war". Recalls his years "as a cub reporter in Halifax". Wonders if he will ever be "a hero in Yorkshire..."

Perhaps he will. But not anywhere else.

MEDIA NEWS

MILD tremors will rock Charlotte Street as the news spreads that the name of ideologically-sound Channel 4 is to be found among the long list of suckers who lost money in the Bank of Crooks and Conmen International.

On 1 July the station placed £5 million on short-term deposit with BCCI — just five days before Robin Leigh-Pemberton closed the bank down. Michael Grade will be lucky to see any of the money again.

No one at Channel 4 can explain the eccentric decision to entrust its cash to BCCI; and it isn't as if the channel was unaware of the cocaine bank's unsavoury habits: in January 1990 it transmitted a *Bandung File* documentary exposing BCCI's involvement in drug-money laundering and made it clear that no one in their right mind would invest in the bank.

BCCI tried desperately to stop the programme being broadcast, first by offering a £2 million bribe to the producer, Tariq Ali, and, when that failed, by applying unsuccessfully for an injunction against Channel 4.

In the middle of this month, Channel 4 will be broadcasting a new *Bandung File* on the BCCI scam. Perhaps C4 executives should take the trouble to watch it this time.

ARMS NEWS

MIDDLE EAST watchers will not be surprised by the speed at which Israel has gone into production of its own Patriot missile system following the Gulf War.

The Dornier Aircraft Works in Friedrichshafen has been researching and developing the new and improved "Scud Buster", the original of which, loaned to Israel by the US, was at the best "messy" and at worst useless. The new missiles are made of a "stealth"-type poly carbon composite, a material that is stronger than aluminium but has a much lower radar profile. Its drawback comes at the manufacturing stage: the composite is toxic and carcinogenic.

Not that this worries the German workforce: they won't touch it; the "hands on" use of this PCC being left solely to immigrant workers mostly from EEC countries where use of these substances is banned or highly restricted.

The modest buildings of this "aircraft factory" sit atop a huge underground complex where at a depth of 60ft another toy is being developed and built for the peace-loving Israelis: a poly carbon delta-winged (pilotless) spy plane. This nice little earner offers the user the added advantage that after it has overflown its target area and sent back pictures via telemetry, it can then be targeted and its onboard warhead detonated at the place of one's choice.

This kamikzae technology is nothing new to the lads at Friedrichshafen. They who built the V1 and V2 rockets that rained down on Britain in the second world war.

HUNT NEWS

FOLLOWING the dismissal of public order charges against hunt saboteur Allan Heatherington after a Chichester magistrate was not satisfied with a senior police officer's evidence (*Eye* 771), magistrates in Crewe have thrown out a case against another saboteur, Guy Morley.

The case arose from an incident in February when Morley was arrested at a meet of the Cheshire Beagles Hunt for allegedly behaving in an abusive way likely to cause "harassment, alarm or distress". The arresting officer, PC Luke McDonnell, gave evidence that he had heard Morley shout "You murdering bastards" at some huntsmen after the hunt had ended, and had arrested him, walking him to a police van in a pub car park without help from other officers.

While he claimed Morley had been cooperative, Morley's solicitor, John Mackenzie, put it to PC McDonnell that his evidence was "a pack of lies" and produced photographs showing that Morley was escorted to the van by several officers who were clearly applying a degree of force. "Your evidence is almost entirely fabricated," Mackenzie told PC McDonnell, who denied the accusation. As a result of Mackenzie's submission that the evidence of PC McDonnell and another officer, PC Carl Capewell, was "clearly completely untruthful and incapable of being relied on" the case was dismissed.

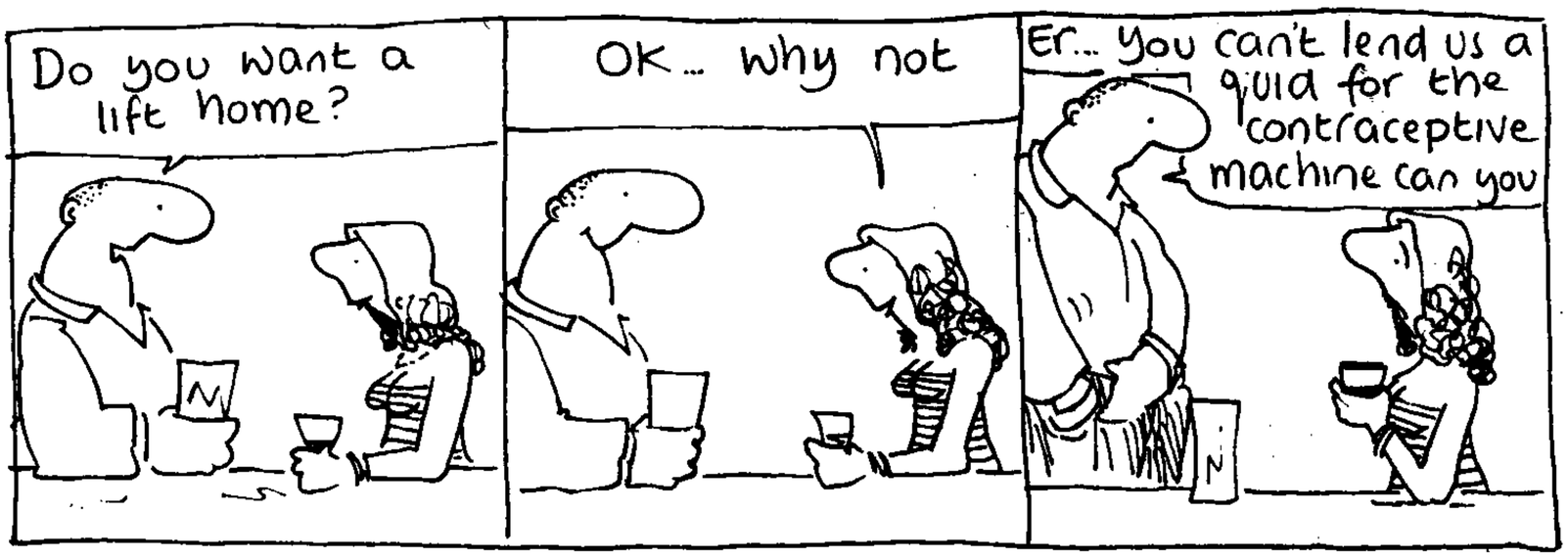
'Reynard'

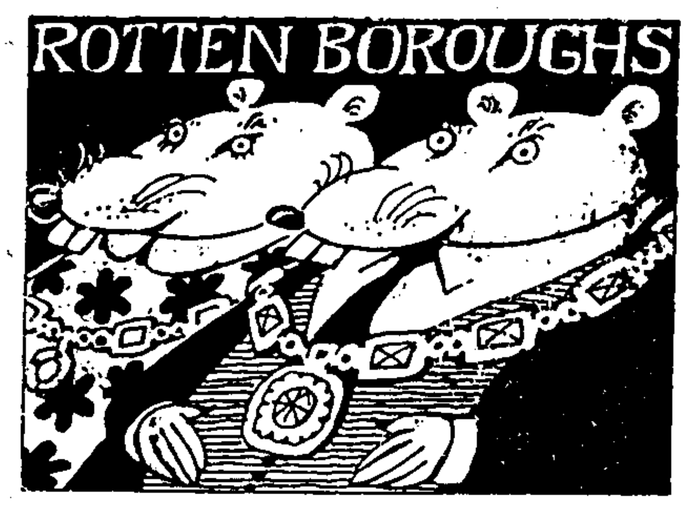
IT'S good to see the *Mail on Sunday* encouraging free enterprise with a "series in which top executives choose their favourite small business".

Last Sunday's captain of industry was one Anthony Simmonds-Gooding, who provided some sound advice: "I have spent all my life in big business and the two recurrent problems I experience are keeping in touch with customers and keeping up the quality of service", he wrote. "But in too many small businesses the owner couldn't run a bath. He often has no idea of his costs, has no sense of direction and has no marketing skills."

The paper was bashful about The Pudding's current employment (or lack of it), but who can forget his last position as chief executive of the doomed BSB? Costs there were out by about a billion pounds, but it's touching that all those *Mail* hacks who picked up lucrative work on the pathetic Galaxy channel have remembered their benefactor. Nobody else has.

HUSBAND





BCCI Special

WHILE public attention centres on the Government's ignominious role in the BCCI scandal, the actions of the councils who invested chargepayers' hard-earned money in the disgraced bank are failing to come under the same scrutiny.

More than 35 mainly northern Labour local authorities helped prop up BCCI's cocaine smugglers and embezzlers with £85.6 million of public money. Yet there is a whiff of implausibility about the way the municipal victims are demanding a public inquiry into the Bank of England's and the Government's handling of the bank's collapse. The inquiry the councils want must surely include in its remit a detailed examination of how highly-paid town hall finance officers, alone of the country's money monitors, came to be unaware of BCCI's disreputable standing on the international financial stage.

The councils disingenuously plead innocence on the grounds that BCCI was on the Bank of England's approved list of officially authorised banking institutions. In fact, Bank of England approval merely acted as a licence — it didn't oblige any local authority to invest in BCCI. But then again, didn't the councils wonder why the Securities and Investments Board had never given BCCI full authorisation, so denying clients adequate compensation in the event of collapse?

The stung councils fall into a number of camps.

There is the recidivist, such as ever-dismal **Wigan** which has lost £2.15 million in BCCI. Having taken its money out when the bank was involved in drug laundering in 1989, Wigan returned to the scene of the crime after believing stories that BCCI had been restructured and refinanced. Unfortunately, Wigan just can't stop re-offending: in February it lost nearly £1 million when the London finance services group, Chancery, went into administration!

Next up, the better-late-than-never merchants, **Allerdale** council, Cumbria, known to *Eye* readers for its substantial losses in the failed Keswick Spa time-share scheme, only invested in BCCI for the first time a week before the bank was closed.

Then there are the buck-passers. **York's** reaction to its £1.3 million loss was repeated by many: "We would expect to see every attempt made by the Bank of England to reimburse local authorities bearing in mind they knew things were wrong." Obscure **Alnwick** in Northumberland similarly claimed: "One has to rely on the regulatory authorities doing the right job," and **Barrow** chipped in with a naive: "It has always been assumed that local authority investments in institutions (such as BCCI) were secure." Had York, Alnwick and Barrow read the City pages in recent issues of *Private Eye* and the *Observer* in June they too would have known that "things were wrong" and that the authorities' "approval" was worthless.

But, lest one forget, the sensible do exist. **Tower Hamlets** had the impression that brokers acting between BCCI and local authorities "were offered extra commission to get them work". Tower Hamlets also revealed that following court action against BCCI in the United States it felt that BCCI "wasn't an appropriate place for our money".

Lambeth also then stopped dealing with BCCI and **Birmingham**, Britain's most economically powerful borough, suddenly withdrew its multi-million pound stake last February for reasons the council won't disclose. Coincidentally the city's auditors, Price Waterhouse, were also responsible for investigations into BCCI which led the Bank of England to act.

WESTERN ISLES

THE Independent-controlled authority which runs the Hebridean island chain has shown a level of incompetence in its dealings with BCCI without peer in Britain.

Western Isles lodged £23 million out of an annual budget of £54 million with the disgraced bank. To help finance this gift, er, loan, the council had previously borrowed £176 million from the Public Works Loan Board offset against future government grants. The plan was that the Isles would reap a quick profit and so have extra cash to finance urgent capital projects. But alas there will be no new roads, schools, chapels or wickermen in the Hebrides for some time.

Having invested one large sum last March, Western Isles then substantially increased investment over the next three months culminating in a £1.6 million loan — itself a sum bigger than almost any other authority invested — at 12.45 pm on Friday 5 July, a quarter of an hour before the Bank of England ordered BCCI branches to shut!

Western Isles now wants the Treasury to stump up even more cash to bail it out, despite its own astonishing carelessness and ignorance. Council leaders knew nothing about their vanishing stock until it was too late. Responsibility for protecting the crofting folk's meagre resources was passed from council leader to chief executive to director of finance to humble council accountant to brokers R.P. Martin Sterling, one of whose staff is a cousin of the council's finance director Donald Macleod, since suspended by the council. Macleod had previously been reprimanded by the Commission for Local Authority Accounts for engaging in a risky loan game with English authorities involving £20 million.

STOCKPORT

THE carelessness with which the ruling Lib-Lab coalition run Stockport has been amply demonstrated by the council's odd reactions to its BCCI losses.

Stockport made two "loans" totalling £1.15m to BCCI. The first, for £800,000, went out on 13 June and was due back on 17 July. Disgruntled charge payers shouldn't worry about the remaining £350,000, though. Banked with BCCI last April, that instalment isn't due back until 20 December, by which time the council's Liberal leader, Eric Kime, should have been able to fulfil his promise to "personally go and demand [the money] back from the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi".

He may as well go cap in hand to the Nabob of Bunipar for all the chance he has of extricating a cent of Stockport's investment. Worse still, the council still has a further £20 million in a variety of banks and building societies whose legitimacy is governed, according to Kime, "by being authorised in accordance with the regulations", as doubtless was the BCCI money.

But Stockport still hasn't grasped the full implication of its losses. Not only is it refusing to name the brokers it used to invest in BCCI, but, remarkably, at a recent full meeting of the council, Kime told incredulous members that "no Stockport employees have direct-to-bank arrangements with BCCI", that he has set staff checking whether any chargepayers pay by direct debit or standing order using BCCI and, in case anyone does try to hoodwink the council's hawk-eyed financial staff, "all divisional directors have been requested not to accept BCCI cheques".

Desperate to extricate himself from a mess which could have been averted, Kime, who inexplicably received the OBE for political services last June, finished his address to the good citizens of Stockport with a cheap jibe at the Street of Shame: "There has been much speculation in the media about reports in the press that indicated that this bank was rumoured to be on the point of collapse for some time. This is not so..."

On the contrary, it *is* so. As recently as last June *Eye* 770 warned of the dangers of banking with BCCI: "How long will it be before the Bank of England seizes the BCCI nettle? Week by week evidence mounts from across the Atlantic of BCCI's illegal activities," we wrote.

The response of finance director Ted Lush to this proof was astonishing: "I'm afraid we don't read *Private Eye*'s financial pages. Could you let us know if there are any other banks who are about to go the same way?"

KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

IN THE WORLD of sleazy property developers, they don't come much sleazier or more dishonest than London & Edinburgh Trust, bought in 1990 for £500m by a Swedish insurance group, SPP.

One of the smaller developments in which LET is involved was submitted to the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea's planning committee for "retrospective" planning permission in 1988 and rejected. (RBKC is currently being looked at by the local government corruption unit.)

Permission was sought to develop a piece of land that LET had acquired on the old Chelsea College sight near the Kings Road between Hortensia Road and Gunter Grove. Kensington & Chelsea planning officers condemned the scheme as an "overdevelopment of the site" describing it as "bulky, intrusive and cliff like." But LET had already begun to develop the site and had clearly breached the permission that had originally been granted. Local residents were none too happy either, particularly when they discovered that LET had produced a "canvass" alleging overwhelming local support for the proposals.

The "canvass" consisted of a series of questionnaires, apparently filled out by residents in Gunter Grove, wherein they expressed their support for the scheme. In fact every single one of the residents named in the survey has denied filling in the questionnaires and wrote to the council to say that they were opposed to the scheme.

The residents then got into action and 40 of them signed a petition which was sent to the planning department chairman, Councillor Simon Orr-Ewing. Briefly, Orr-Ewing could see no reason to the objections raised by residents and sided with LET. The development went ahead.

In a separate later incident, however, Orr-Ewing told an interviewer that he had accepted a commission payment not unadjacent to £10,000 from a property developer, Edward Wood, chief of Commercial and Residential plc, for "finding" a site in Peterborough via the Prudential Insurance Company. Shortly before the money was paid to Orr-Ewing, the planning committee of the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, then chaired by Orr-Ewing, granted planning permission to the very same property developer for a site at 535 New Kings Road, known as Plaza 535.

Interestingly enough Orr-Ewing's father, Lord Orr-Ewing, was a member of the committee that drafted a paper, with guidelines, entitled *The Royal Commission on Standards of Conduct in Public Life* following the notorious Poulson case. It is thought that the boy Orr-Ewing has neither read the report nor its recommendations. If he had he would have noticed the following: "The law makes specific provision requiring you to disclose pecuniary interests, direct and indirect."

FACT: Simon Orr-Ewing is no longer a councillor.

SHEFFIELD

THE 5,000 hardworking and unpaid local volunteers who physically rescued Sheffield's World Student Games from disaster might be interested to learn of a secret meeting convened in the town hall just 48 hours before the follies opened.

Late on the afternoon of 12 July, council leader and socialist firebrand Clive Betts, together with comrades Peter Price, Joan Barton and a couple of other councillors, closed the doors to the press and public and then discussed a secret report informing them that, under council rules, they could not claim allowances for acting as "official hosts" during the two-week event.

Even worse, they would be obliged to miss council meetings where they *could* claim allowances. Horrified, in the best democratic traditions they immediately voted to change the rules to pay themselves £21 each time they attended the games. For some reason news of this move has been suppressed so as not to enrage the 5,000 volunteers who swept floors to make the event fit for civic dignitaries.

Comrade Betts will become an MP at the next election and no doubt back Labour's demands for a Freedom of Information Act so that the people can find out what their representatives get up to in private.

POLICE 5

THE FATE of Alison Halford, Britain's highest ranking policewoman, should act as a warning to any other female who dares intrude on the all-male, Freemasons' preserve that is the upper ranks of the constabulary.

After she brought a case against the chief constable of Merseyside at the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Merseyside Police Authority decided to investigate her complaints. While David Henshaw, clerk to the authority, appears to have been somewhat lacking in assiduity in pursuit of this, no one could say the same of his conduct of the disciplinary inquiry against Halford, launched — quite coincidentally — shortly after her complaint. Indeed, so enthusiastic was he that he approached Sheila Cameron QC to chair the disciplinary tribunal before the police authority had instituted proceedings.

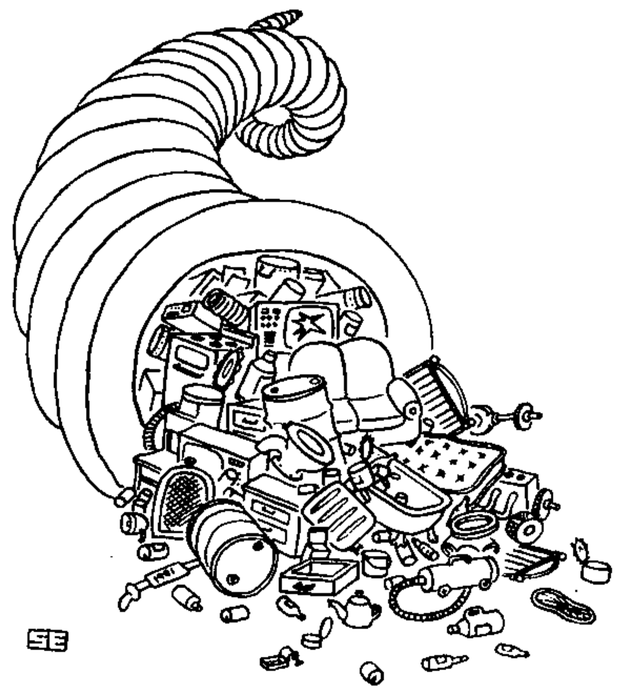
Somehow full details of her alleged offence — diving into a swimming pool in her underwear — were leaked to the press to prepare the way, while senior members of the authority ventilated their prejudices against alleged "lesbianism". Confusingly, one member of the police authority, tearful Harry Rimmer, leader of Liverpool City Council, claimed to concerned councillors that the costs of Chief Constable Jim Sharples "are being covered by the insurance policy of the police authority, but the police authority is not involved". (Interestingly, the insurance of Merseyside's police cars is now third party only as result of economy measures which will leave Z cars even more scantily covered than Alison Halford was alleged to have been.)

As well as being clerk to the police authority, Henshaw is the chief executive of Knowsley council, where councillors compare his solicitude that Halford be ready for duty all the time with his reticence to disclose his own address to anyone. They are equally unhappy that what one councillor called a "diminutive tyrant" has increased the public relations budget for Knowsley by 600 percent, appointing a friend, one Brian Harvey, in the process.

However, no one should take this large budget as an indication of more open government. The police authority is appealing against an industrial tribunal order to reveal documents in the Halford sex discrimination case.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'



A GANG of environmental health officers seems to have had a field day at the Royal Highland Show. Armed with their new non-jackboot powers under the Food Safety Act, the Ingleston gathering of the cream of Scottish farming was heaven-sent.

The EHOs started with soft targets like the smaller hospitality stands... Had they got three washing-up sinks? Were the cheese and pickle rolls in a refrigerated unit? No? Many exhibitors were left doling out cream crackers with their whisky.

Flushed with triumph, the raiding party moved in for the Big One: a chance to bust the ladies of the Borders Branch of "The Rural", Scotland's answer to the Women's Institute. Simple, ruddy-faced Liberal voters from the hills, time has passed them by.: they are still living in the days when you bake a cake — or 12 — wrap them, price them and sell them.

In went the EHO lads. These sponges lacked a label with the ingredients and the E numbers of any additives. Where was the weight label? What about the sell-by date? Had the kitchen in which they were baked been inspected by Border EHOs? Did the manufacturers of said sponges cook them for a living? No, once a year, replied the rather grand lady from Melrose.

As queues had formed of farming folk wanting to buy these poisonous cakes, it was time for the formidable ladies of the committee to act. Smoothing their pinnies, the committee encircled the EHOs. They explained the essence of a good sponge. "Beat it." And they did.

OLD MUCK urges all Eye readers to ask their MPs and MEPs what they think of the "Draft Treaty on the Union" Document 2008.91.

This text has run into surprising and repeated printers' difficulties in both Brussels and London: 140 pages of alarming authorisation for bureaucracy untrammelled by democratic control is offered. While the G7 rhubarb harvest was promising to open frontiers to free trade and to contain the ever-madder common agricultural policy, Document 2008.91 promises to preserve the agricultural and fisheries policy. Or, as it says in Brussels bluntness, "Agriculture Articles 38-47 shall be unchanged." Quite.

And Old Muck thought the promises of "irrevocable fixing of exchange rates between the currencies of the Member States and the introduction of a single currency, the ecu" was particularly in line with the Government's undertaking not to bind future Parliaments.

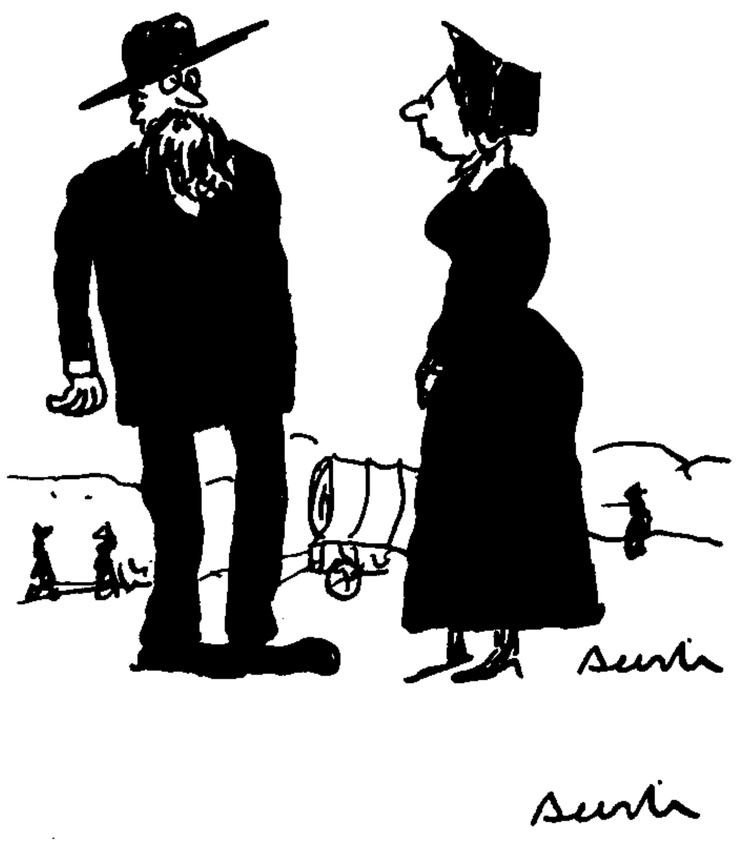
THE NICE, kind, generous Minister for Agriculture has announced yet another subsidy scheme. Countryside Stewardship will enable farming folk ("It's a way of life") to receive annual payments of £300 a hectare if they have pretty chalk or limestone grassland, heath, waterside areas, coastal land or hill lands.

That sounds suspiciously like any land, and the trick will be to have a good nose for paperwork. Without the skill for filling in forms and telling little lies about each acre you will not make it as a farmer.

Imagine paying a Dagenham car worker £300 not to make Ford Escorts, or £300 to each employee of a Marks & Spencer knicker manufacturer who refused to make knickers, and you would have the economic sense of "Stewardship" money for not farming.

If they miss out on this new scheme, farmers can still apply for conservation grants, golf course, leisure or recreational grants, dry stone walling grants, outstanding scientific interest grants, NCC grants, farm woodland grants... the Country Landowners' Association lists 36 different subventions, all payable for not farming.

"They sow not, neither do they reap." So the game is that the EC/CAP will pay you to farm and the UK will pay you not to farm. This is called "An Integrated Policy for the Countryside".



"My other wives don't understand me"

MUSEUM NEWS

THERE seems to be one set of rules for staff at the Natural History Museum and quite another for the great and good who sit on the museum's board of trustees.

While the museum's flunkies are increasingly puzzled and annoyed by the continued presence on the board of bent businessman Gerald Ronson, none of Ronson's fellow trustees — who include Sir Owen Green of BTR and Sir Denys Henderson of ICI — seem at all concerned at their association with a notorious crook.

But then, why should they? Neither Margaret Thatcher (who appointed him) nor her successor has seen any reason to remove him following his Guinness conviction, and since his release from Ford open prison last month both the Queen Mother and Princess Di have made it clear that it is an honour to meet him. In fact, bets are now being laid that Ronson will receive a knighthood within the next three years.

However, with such new standards of propriety being set, the handbook laying down conditions of service for staff at the museum reads like a quaint relic. It decrees that employees' activities "must not be such as might bring discredit on the Service, eg heavy gambling and speculation are to be avoided." And it adds: "The high standard which the Service sets itself goes beyond the normal standards of personal honesty and integrity — the civil servant must not only be honest in fact but he must not lay himself open to suspicion of dishonesty."

Ronson, meanwhile, still seems determined not to do the decent thing and resign. As one senior museum employee commented, perhaps a virtue should be made of his presence by exhibiting him in the front hall as a rare specimen of the Great Jail-Bird — with due acknowledgement to the generous sponsorship of Guinness plc.

MICHAEL FOOT delivered a petition to arts minister Tim Renton last week, begging him to think again about the closure of the British Library reading room in Bloomsbury.

Behind the old bibliophile's protest is one of the more scandalous wastes of public money in modern times. About £450 million is being spent on the new British Library building in St Pancras — yet library supremo Kenneth Cooper recently admitted that the new building will be "second rate". It has also been revealed that the new library will have already run out of shelf space by the time it opens in 1996; and that the number of desks for readers — instead of the 3,440 originally promised — will be 1,176, an increase of just 70 on the number already provided.

Regular users of the library are now urging Renton to keep the Bloomsbury facilities — which are offered rent-free by the British Museum — to accommodate all the books and readers who can't fit into the St Pancras monstrosity.

Meanwhile, staff at the library are desperately trying to come to terms with the new technology that will be used at St Pancras — notably the mobile shelves, which aim to maximise storage space. Unfortunately, the shelving units are now suspected of having "inherent" design flaws after the testing of a prototype. As they move, the books on them are joggled forward towards the edge of the shelf so that they either fall over or are crushed.

This "vibration and whipping" is predicted to cause serious damage, and with only weeks to go before the first books arrive at St Pancras — with millions to follow — no solution is in sight.

Sporting Life

WHAT HAS happened to the Jockey Club's famous campaign to highlight the great financial crisis in racing?

We were told the campaign would cruelly expose the diabolical way in which the off-course betting industry has been making pots of money at racing's expense. Well, after 15 months of position papers and presentations that appear to have led precisely nowhere, all that has been wholly exposed are the flaws and inconsistencies in the arguments put forward by racing's numerous pressure groups.

The very existence of the Jockey Club itself has been called into question by parliamentarians wearied by all these little squabbling pockets of self-interest. The game was up for the Portman Square brigade from the moment Stoker Hartington and his pink-faced chief executive Christopher Haines trooped off to see the home affairs select committee and started talking vaguely about wanting "a ball-park figure" of £80 million a year from the betting levy (ie the punters) for racing's "product".

The committee concluded in its report in May that Stoker and Chris were marginally less qualified to conduct direct commercial negotiations with the bookmakers than Gussie Fink-Nottle. Now even the committee's modest levy recommendations have been turned down flat by Kenneth Baker, proving what Stoker should have known from the outset: that as long as the Treasury can make roughly £460 million a year in betting duty from the current arrangements, nothing is going to change.

In the meantime the Jockey Club's constant refrain that insufficient prize money is driving hard-pressed owners and trainers away from the sport has been made to look ridiculous by the spectacle of only a handful of two year olds contesting £30,000 races on good going at Newmarket and a single figure turnout for Ascot's King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes with its £320,000 of added money.

We have seen such hard-pressed owners as Sheikh Mohammed denying that he borrowed £120 million from BCCI and then forking out another $30 million to pay for more yearlings at Keeneland. And we have seen the hard-up Lord White of Hull confessing belatedly and under pressure that 80 percent of the horses he has in training with Luca Cumani, another severely straitened individual, are paid for unwittingly by shareholders in Hanson Trust.

Not to be outdone the Racecourse Association has splashed out £40,000 on a survey to find out why people do and do not go racing. One shocking revelations is that many potential customers are put off by the sport's elitist and elderly to middle-aged image. Could this, one wonders, have anything to do with some of those crusty old characters that present the sport on TV? Like Lord Oaksey of Sandown, for example.

During one afternoon of Channel 4's coverage of the July meeting at Newmarket, the lord mayor of Malmesbury was featured slumped in a chair on the members' lawn. The intention was presumably to remind us of the relaxed ambience of HQ in summer; but it looked for all the world as if the plucky old stager was sitting in his bath chair waiting for a uniformed nurse to give him another tranquillising shot with her syringe and wheel him off into the shade to enjoy his much deserved and surely impending retirement.

'Major Bonkers'

HEALTH NEWS

AT Guy's, patients (including the blind and paralysed) were bemused to receive souvenir retractable biros from Sir Philip Harris, chairman of the Guy's and Lewisham Trust, to celebrate "topping out" the new building on the site next to Guy's Tower.

This generosity comes at a time when physios are being sacked, SHOs (junior doctors) not reappointed, a canteen closed, and 92 domestics and porters being laid off. The "topping out" party was attended by Norma Major, who was introduced to carefully selected patients over canapés at 10am.

General manager Peter Griffiths, who receives £90,000 for a 40-hour week, has a company car for himself and also one for his wife. It is unclear what function she performs at Guy's.

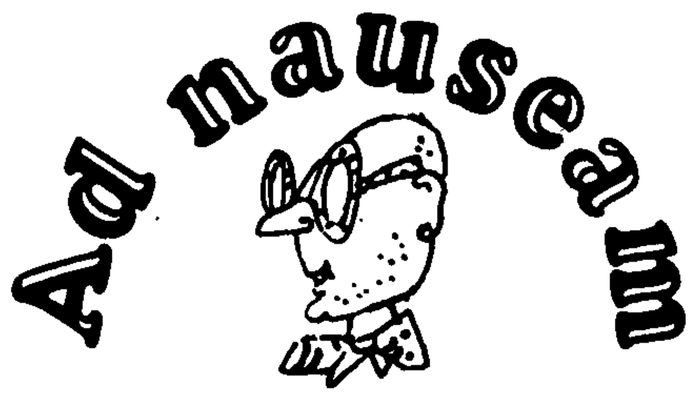
ON THE RIGS

FOLLOWING the report in the last *Eye* about North Sea divers' safety and the pending prosecutions of Stena Offshore Ltd, the *Eye* hears of yet a third prosecution of the company over an incident in which a diver lost his gas supply after leaving the diving bell.

His partner found, to his astonishment, that the diver's helmet was connected not to the breathing gas supply but to hot water. While Stena tried to hush this up, an inexperienced manager in its Great Yarmouth office included the Health and Safety Executive on its incident report distribution list.

Meanwhile yet more embarrassment has been caused to Stena by the conviction of a number of its employees for defrauding the electricity companies. Dawn raids on Stena workers throughout the country revealed "black boxes" attached to their electricity meters in such a way that the use of electricity was substantially "underestimated". The boxes were made to order on a Stena dive support vessel by some of Stena's more experienced technicians.

A dive superintendent (described as "an oil worker" despite his yacht, his Mercedes and his £350,000 house) was fined £5,000. His brother was sent to prison for a year. More of this sort of thing is expected to emerge from the inquiries now being pursued into Stena's contract with Unical.



Sir,

Have any of your readers noticed a similarity between an ad for Pepsi Cola, a film called DINER *(never seen it myself) and letters from Gavin Buchanan (*EYE *770) and Kevin P. Quinn (722)? Somebody's not concentrating. Can I have a tenner too? [*NO. SUB-ED.*]*

Yours faithfully,
IAN D. HARRAGON,

London SE5.

Sir,

The Piemontello sparkling wine TV commercial, in which the blond male hunk comes a cropper in front of three adoring females, is surely related to Del Boy's tumble when leaning on a non-existent bar counter, in an episode of ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES.

Yours, in Sterling please,
ALASTAIR BLAIR,

Edinburgh.

Sir,

Have your readers noticed the extraordinary coincidence between the current Pepsi-Cola ad (truckload of Pepsi teetering over cliff) and the closing scene of THE ITALIAN JOB *(bus load of gold bars etc teetering over cliff)?*

Another rip-off, shurely?

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER GLIDEWELL,

St Andrew's, Fife.

● ***£10 paid for similar contributions***

Letters

God only knows

Sir,

*Has "All-Seeing Eyes" actually read the novels referred to in his anti-A.N. Wilson article? (*EYE *722). I have read all of Mr Wilson's books including, of course,* KINDLY LIGHT *and* THE HEALING ACT. *In neither of these does he plug Anglicanism. Quite the contrary, I'd say. Profound scepticism beams out of both books. And then there's* HOW CAN WE KNOW? *The title is enough.*

Mr Wilson confesses — all over the place, including the Chatto pamphlet — to deep religious urges. But that doesn't make him an opportunist, bobbing and weaving to suit the market.

By the way; if A.N.W. should happen to see this letter, I'd like him to know that a friend of mine (who seems to know what he's on about) thinks BOTTLE IN THE SMOKE *(book title) should read* BLADDER IN THE FROST.

Yours faithfully,
EUGENIE BOCOCK,

Wallasey, Wirral.

Can't read English

Sir,

Re Your piece on the forthcoming ritual abuse conference (Church News, EYE *722). For the record I read theology at St Andrew's University because no other college would have me and because I couldn't get in to read English. My record as a theologian was something less than impressive.*

I don't belong to or attend any church of any denomination. If it taught me anything, three years' theology instilled a deep distrust of organised religion.

The reason I am speaking at the conference is because my book on ritual abuse is published in August. It is the product of more than three years' research, is strongly critical of both the evangelical Christian response and the evangelical occult reaction to the problem. It is strictly a secular book: my concern is children not dogmatic creeds.

FACT: There have been six successfully prosecuted cases of ritual abuse in Britain since 1983.

Yours faithfully,
TIM TATE,

Keighley, West Yorkshire.

Greene waistcoats

Sir,

Sadly Graham Greene never did see any of my brocade waistcoats, but it is true that I have recently been selling some of them to raise money for charity.

The agency, however, is most emphatically not for sale: it continues to flourish and, if you think about it, will continue to do so for a very long while on all the commissions we are due to receive on Graham's work alone.

Yours very truly,
GERALD POLLINGER,

Laurence Pollinger Ltd, London W1.

Holiday '91

Sir,

Yes, it would have been surprising if, as the BBC's media corespondent, I had "watched from the sidelines" as someone else reported on John Birt's appointment as director general-designate. But I was on holiday in France at the time, which is why Polly Toynbee did the story instead. Shame about the facts.

Yours faithfully,
NICK HIGHAM,

BBC Television Centre, London W12.

What a banker

Sir,

Those of his former colleagues at Midland Bank who will have read with interest of the resurfacing of the egregious Peter White in Health News (EYE 722) will be wondering whether his career will continue to follow the path of the occupier some 60 years ago at the house now owned by White, The Old Rectory, Stiffkey, Norfolk.

The Reverend Harold S. Davidson, known as the Prostitutes' Padre, an account of whose history is given by Tom Cullen in his book of the same name, was defrocked after many years of unseemly interest in young women in Soho. Thereafter he continued to protest the innocence of his motives until he met his end after being mauled by a lion in its cage in a circus act.

Yours faithfully,
F.P. BECKETT.

London N7.

Burden of guilt

Sir,

Your list of the Lord Chief Justice Lord Lane's involvement in historic injustices (EYE 722) was incomplete. Lord Lane also presided over and, of course, dismissed the first application for appeal by Vincent and Michael Hickey and Jim Robinson, who were wrongly convicted of the murder of Carl Bridgewater.

In the final and successful appeal of the Guildford Four he had no choice but to release them as the Crown had already conceded the case. He therefore grudgingly allowed the appeal and in doing so added insult to injury by summing up the 15 years stolen from four innocent people as "this unhappy matter".

Time M'Lud,
C. NEWKEY-BURDEN,

London SW15.

Reflections in an Open Eye

Sir,

It is surprising to see a fine journalist like Peter Taylor (EYE 772) getting into such a twist about the Stalker Affair. He dismisses people who disagree with his conclusions as mere conspiracy theorists, though he himself does not provide satisfactory evidence to answer crucial questions.

Granada's OPEN EYE documentary in May 1990 (not GRANADA REPORTS as suggested) followed the chain of events which led to the collapse of the trial of businessman Kevin Taylor amid allegations of perjury by police officers and the "loss" of vital police files. Kevin Taylor had lost his business and his home on the strength of the police investigation and it is perfectly legitimate to question the motives behind the case.

The programme revealed that seven months **before** *Stalker was asked to take indefinite leave, the police knew that Kevin Taylor was not involved in drug trafficking, the movement of firearms or other serious crimes. It also showed that the Co-op Bank had never made a complaint against Kevin Taylor. And it revealed that a senior officer of the RUC met with at least one officer of the Manchester police team investigating Kevin Taylor.*

Peter accuses us of leaving this latter mystery unexplained and "pregnant with conspiratorial meaning". Far from it; we raised it with Sir John Hermon who claimed no knowledge of it. Sir John made further checks and then stated that, while he could not name the officer, he was certain it would have been a routine meeting. We duly reported that comment.

In fact, it emerged in court that the RUC officer was taken to the airport by a Greater Manchester policeman who was working exclusively on the Kevin Taylor investigation. This would have been an unusual task for a policeman on such an inquiry. In fact, he agreed in court that he had never been asked to do this before or since. However, such a gesture would have been entirely understandable if the senior RUC officer had ended his visit to Manchester by coming into contact with officers investigating Kevin Taylor.

After the drive, the Manchester policeman returned to the Co-op Bank and later went to an interview with a senior inspector on the case. Given the background of the Stalker Affair, some might think that Peter was naive to accept the simple police explanation for this.

At best, the Stalker Affair was a remarkable set of coincidences. At worst, it was a conspiracy. It is up to journalists to ask the sort of questions which eventually reveal the truth. The most dangerous thing to do is to accept one version of events to the exclusion of other evidence.

Yours sincerely,
CHARLES TREMAYNE,
(Editor, Open Eye)

Granada Television, Manchester.

Creep

Sir,

It is time the nation's attention was drawn by the national press to the commendable and fearless manner in which over the years you have reported matters they were too scared to even hint at and subsequent revelations have proved you right time after time from the sad Helen Smith affair to the Alpha rig disaster, the Kincora boys' home, Colin Wallace, John Stalker, the Guildford 4, the Birmingham 6, Death on the Rock, Irangate, Noriega, Panama, the Ferry disaster, the Blunt affair, etc, etc to the present BCCI con.

The least they could do is give you banner headlines, honouring your intrepid reporter who ventured where the Establishment Press, which is most of it, have always feared to go. Of course, there is no fear of them doing this, none the less I think they should all be told.

I realise this letter could put me well up in the OBN league, but to give PRIVATE EYE some well deserved praise is worth the risk.

All the best from,
DENIS CRONIN,

Bradfield, Berkshire.

PS: If you twisted my arm I might accept a free subscription when my present one expires.

Late-night horror

Sir,

As you have had more dealings with the law than myself I wondered if your legal department would be able to tell me if I could sue Channel 4 for not preceding the programme STAR TEST featuring Mr G. Bushell with the warning message "Some viewers may find the content of the following programme disturbing and offensive". I didn't sleep at all well and was late for work this morning.

Yours faithfully,
SIMON I. WALTON,

Edinburgh.

PS: The only definition of "star" which seems in any way applicable to Mr Bushell is, according to my Collins Concise, "a hot gaseous mass".

Pedant

Sir,

Either John Major's Diary is about as reliable as Hitler's, or perhaps Auberon Waugh's or, which is more likely, Mr Major does not know what day it is (EYE 722). Test matches are not played on Wednesdays in England.

Yours sincerely,
KEITH FLETT,

London N17.

Moving hosue [sic]

Sir,

Your recent item on Rupert Murdoch's forthcoming memoirs gives Random House as the publisher. In fact Weidenfeld & Nicolson acquired world rights and will be publishing in the UK next June. Random Hosue [SIC] will publish in the US.

Yours faithfully,
DIANE ROWLEY,

Weidenfeld & Nicolson Ltd, London SW4.

Penguins

Sir,

While Piloti (EYE 722) evidently places the welfare of a few inanimate (and ugly) lumps of concrete before that of a large number of sentient and (if we are not to deceive ourselves utterly) evidently miserable creatures, I for one am glad that "animal rights sentimentalists" are likely to prevail over callous sightseers and that London Zoo is likely to close.

It is a pity that Piloti's usually enlightened column should be marred by such an outstanding example of human arrogance as the remark that it is perfectly OK to keep animals confined in cramped and dismal cages in order that they may "contribute to the delight of Londoners". The sooner Londoners, and anyone else for that matter, stop "delighting" in the imprisonment of animals, the better things will be. Not only for the poor beleaguered animals, but also for us humans, who should by now be advancing beyond the point where we need to gawp at incarcerated fellow creatures in order to pass a Sunday afternoon.

I don't think that anyone is likely to favour the rights of a penguin pool (which has the distinction of being neither ancient nor beautiful) over the rights of the penguins it was built to contain — and without which it is utterly redundant.

And by the way, why does Piloti think that Antwerp is a particularly civilised city? Does s/he know something we don't?

Yours faithfully,
ELEANOR SMITH,

St Werburghs, Bristol.

Lookalike

Sir,

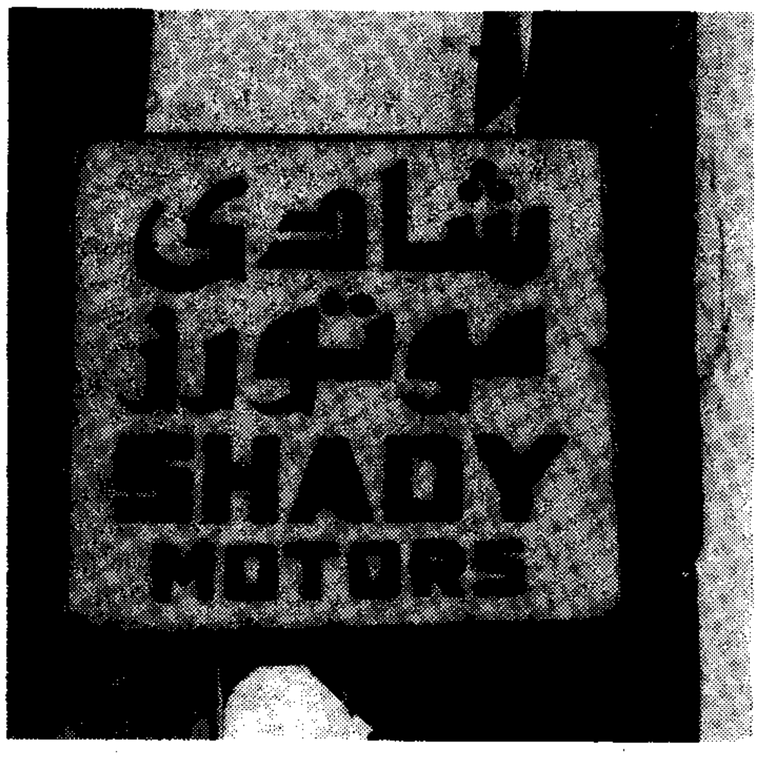
I wonder how many of your readers may have noticed the startling resemblance between the model in the above knitting pamphlet, published by Sirdar Ltd of Wakefield, and a certain well-known Prime Minister?

ENA McKAY,

Whirlpool Farm, Burwash.

I-SPY

Cairo



Submitted by S.G. Holloway. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

One born every minute

Sir,

I feel I should set the record straight regarding the occupancy of Riverside Health Authority's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (EYE 722). *In common with all other such units in our region, the first two weeks of June were a very quiet period. However, the unit was considerably busier in the remainder of June with the monthly occupancy figure reaching 72 percent overall, comparing reasonably with our normal average of 75 - 80 percent.*

Costs are high for neonatal intensive care generally, since work is extremely labour intensive in this area. Our results are excellent however, with a 95 percent successful outcome. The special health authority units at Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's are in a privileged position this year with protected funding from the Department of Health and therefore are offering a "free" service. Every other unit in the country is in the same position as us and is charging for its services.

I trust that EYE *readers will be reassured to know that our unit, far from being near empty, is flourishing and providing excellent results.*

Yours faithfully,
ROGER P. MARWOOD,

West London Hospital, Hammersmith.

Pork in sauce

Sir,

The HP Sauce column has twice compared the Conservative MP John Carlisle to pigs. This is very rude and I wish that "Backbiter" would stop it.

Anyone with any knowledge of pigs can tell you that in the main, they are affectionate, cheerful and intelligent animals, and not to be likened to Tory MPs.

Yours sincerely,
ANNE HOWELL,

Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire.

Large piles

Sir,

I have just spent the weekend at a conference at the Birmingham Metropole.

Whilst newspapers are on sale in the hotel, I have to report a sighting of two large piles of Cap'n Bob's EUROPEAN, *offered free to anyone wishing to pick up a copy.*

Are such copies supplied gratis to the hotel, or does the Metropole fork out for these supplies as a generous gesture to its guests?

Judging by the prices charged for drinks etc in the hotel, I think the former more likely than the latter, but I think we should be told.

Yours etc,
IAN RITCHIE,

Winchester, Hampshire.

Over the hill

Sir,

Several of your readers may have noted the habit of riders in the Tour de France of stuffing newspapers inside the front of their jerseys when they reach the top of a mountain climb. It occurs to me that there may be marketing opportunities here for THE EUROPEAN. *Perhaps Captain Bob should be told.*

Yours faithfully,
PETE LEWIS,

Sheffield.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"I'd like to do a hands up test to find out how many ladies are wearing their thermals today."

EVE POLLARD, BBC1
(Matthew Rose)

"And Lendl's been in the semi-finals every year since, except for the two years he was in the final."

JOHN BARRETT, BBC
(Nicholas Lysons)

"England have their noses in front — not only actually but metaphorically too."

TONY COZIER, BBC
(P. Thompson)

"He's faced with the eternal European triangle... which makes it very difficult to square the circle."

JOHN COLE, BBC World Service
(S.P. Harrison)

Gary Davies: *What kind of box was it?*
Woman: *It was a guitar case.*
Gary Davies: *What was in it?*
Woman: *A guitar.*

RADIO 1
(James Allan)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

WHY DO YOU THINK THE POLTERGEIST IS THE GHOST OF YOUR FRIEND GAIUS..
.. DOES IT THROW THINGS AT YOU?
CASA NOSTRA
NO, IT TIDIES UP, AND REARRANGES THE FLOWERS.
TSK TSK SYMMETRY, SYMMETRY

Letter from **Damascus**

from Our Own Correspondent

WHEN they had the big victory parade in New York, our government never mentioned to us that our troops weren't allowed to march — but that an Israeli contingent was, though they never fought in Desert Storm. Your St Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, and Hafez Al-Assad travels to Damascus often, changing his mind and his allies each trip.

During Desert Storm, the joke was that when people were asked if they had read the official Syrian paper *Al-Baath*, the reply was "No, I don't read Hebrew." Now our censors cut out stories critical of America and our papers have yet to mention the UN search for Iraqi nuclear weapons in case we compare such assiduity with the silence over Israel's arsenal.

But our leader's embracing of the West has shown no benefits. Allah's ways are mysterious, and the Israelis show no signs of moving from the Golan Heights, while our new allies in Washington show no signs of pushing them. It almost makes us appreciate our secret police, who celebrated publicly when the Iraqi Scuds hit Israel, while our troops were facing Iraq's across the Saudi border.

Of course, we love our president really. Because, if anything were to happen to him, we feel sure that his Alawite sect would fight to the last brick of Damascus over who inherits his position. When Hafez Al-Assad was ill for a week in 1983, his army supporters were eyebrow to eyebrow with the Republican Guard led by his brother Rifaat, while columns of tanks rumbled home from Beirut.

After this standoff, Rifaat, known and loved as the one who massacred 25,000 to 50,000 people in Hama, escaped to Paris, where he now calls for democratic solidarity in Syria. None of us relish his robust ideas of democracy, which makes our present plight seem very pleasant. After all, we have seven parties in our ruling National Front, even if they only do what the Baath party tells them, and even if the Baath party only does what the Alawite sect and its present leader, Hafez Al-Assad, tell them.

It is a nice little family business. While the Alawis don't care how many Hamans or Damascenes are killed in the crossfire of their family squabbles, they still look after each other. Rifaat is still getting paid as the vice-president — as long as he doesn't return from Paris. His position as commander of the Republican Guard was inherited by Hafez Al-Assad's son Basil, so the Alawites suffered no net losses.

Assad is even pretending to reform our Albanian-style economy, but the new Investment Law has one main purpose: to allow the generals who made a fortune out of the marijuana trade in Lebanon to launder their profits. However, while Allah is merciful, the jury is still out on Assad. If some one from outside the Baath party is caught trading in hard currency the sentence is 15 years. The latest reform law is supposed to allow private enterprise, but that is because the "Damascus agreement" between Egypt, Syria and the Gulf States said we would use our cannon fodder on their be half, and they would invest in private enterprise.

The only way our Baathists could get their hands on all that oil money was to set up "private enterprises", but non-party members need not apply. For example, the head of military intelligence has the concession for "Double Cola" — and, somehow, Coca Cola is still on our boycott list, even though they've been taken off the Arab boycott Israel list. But it would be a brave entrepreneur who considered opening a Coca Cola concession.

Like the rival family businesses in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, Desert Storm gave us the opportunity to get coalition certificates of democracy. It took a few short months of Desert Storm to move us from joint top place on the Amnesty International hit list with Iraq, to glorious ally of the Western democracies. You British overlooked our attempts to blow up airliners and even reopened diplomatic relations as our agent Hindawi serves his 45-year sentence.

Unfortunately, Assad is a mere 62, so there is every chance he will still be in power when Hindawi is released. On the other hand, Allah is indeed merciful — and it could be Rifaat, after all!

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE'S TRUE STORIES

Illuminated by Bert Kitchen

ON HIS plea of mitigation, Mr John Moresby said: "Mr James Scanner is married to a Zambian lady, Florence. In order to get things off on the right foot, my client George attended his brother James's 'we're back home again' party dressed as a Zulu warrior, carrying a spear, and covered from head to foot in black, white and red creams. Standing on the doorstep, he *O-loo-loo-looed* a greeting to Florence, and the trouble happened soon after that."

"GREAT REALISM was our *aim," said Miss* Reeva Jackson, the Public Needs Consultant for the National Fisheries Heritage World at Grimsby. "The centre took seven years to build and cost £3 million. The highlight of a full visit is a simulated Arctic Trawler Trip. The vessel's bridge rolls through 40 degrees, and icebergs drift by in the howling wind. For our opening ceremony we invited 50 of the country's oldest fishermen. Several of them fainted and all were seasick. But from now on seasick pills will come with the ticket."

"WE DO not intend to go into details," said Mr J.B. Todd of the Lincolnshire Dog Association, "but it is true that after Phoenix Flyer, a 6-year-old Rottweiler, bit Judge George Jumpar in the testicle during the Kidenhall and Weston Show, the dog died and we have not yet established the cause of its death."

"AFTER attending an under-age disco at the Moonlight Motel," said Mr John Driscoll, for the defence, "my client, Charles, who is just 15, was offered a free rock haircut. Asked what he wanted by way of a design, Charles said: 'Do what you want, I believe in artistic freedom.'

"Five minutes later his friends told him that he had the words FUCK YOU 'cut like type and dyed in bright orange' across the back of his skull and, as he had no money for a second haircut, he was arrested for an obscene display on the platform of the Flinders Street railway station on his way home."

Representing the Australian Transport Police, Mr Bob Younger said: "To see those words when you are about to buy a ticket is the equivalent of being told to fuck off. People may expect that sort of language when travelling by bus, but not in a railway station."

Asked if she had a comment on the matter, the Reverend Anne Amos, Chairwoman of the Victorian Council of Churches, said that she saw the case as a fact about gender relations.

DURING his interview, Mr Buff Mashamba, Assistant Chief Fire Officer of the Kenya Fire Department (Mombasa South), said: "We responded to the call and hurried to the Embakasi Container Depot. But by the time we got there the wooden bridge between us and the depot was in flames so we could not get to the fire itself."

Asked why he did not call for more help, Mr Mashamba said that the coin-box phone by the bridge had been vandalised, "and in any case it would have been useless, because the fire station phones are all dead. We are cut off from the world, and, as you can see, we have no fire engine and came here on our bicycles."

Further questioning revealed that there was a fire engine, "bought from the Bradford (England) Fire Department as part of a Wave-and-Save Scheme, in 1967. It is parked outside the Mombasa South Fire Station, but has been out of order since the time of arrival."

Mr Mashamba went on to say that there was no point in trying to interview the man who had been given the job of getting the engine back onto the road because he had gone back to his village the moment he heard that there were reporters about.

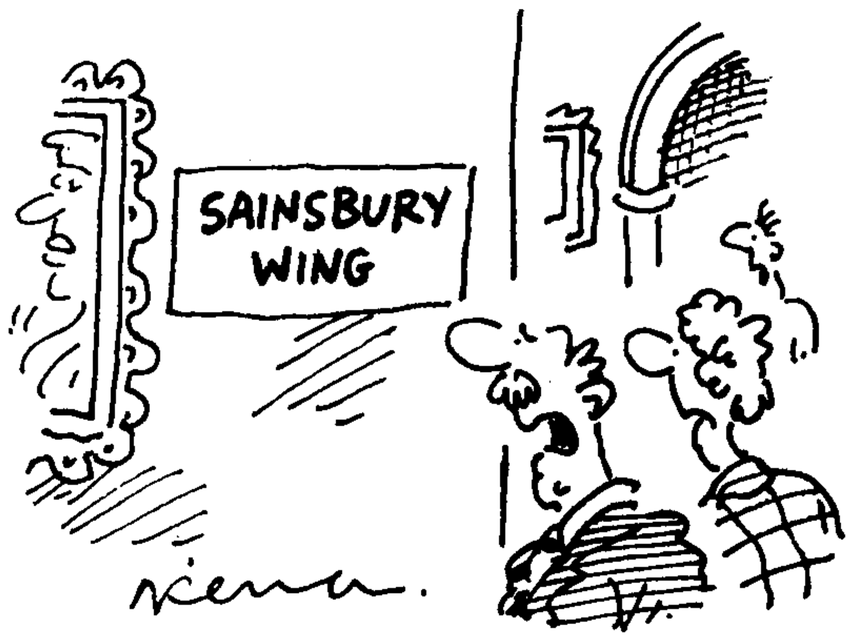
AFTER crashing her car into a wall while she was practising for her full licence, Miss Edwina Pearson (81) of Scots Gap, Northumberland, admitted that she was being helped by her passenger and friend, Mr Fenwick Rutherford (87), who has been a registered blind person for several years.

INFORMATION: Glasgow Evening Times 10.4.91; Fishing News 31.5.91; National News Agency 21.5.91; Melbourne Age 17.5.91; Kenya Standard 13.2.91; Alnwick Advertiser 11.4.91.

MONITORS: Ian Eccleston, Gavin M. McNicoll, Stephen J. Cole, Dr A.D. & Mrs J.M. Atkinson, John M. Nixon, David M. Landers.

Fergie communicates with patient Mr. Alistair Arthur, who has speech difficulties.

Chatham, Rochester & Gillingham News



"This sort of thing will put small, local galleries out of business"

1981-1991

Their Royal Highnesses,
The Prince and Princess of Wales
10th Wedding Anniversary

SPECIAL SOUVENIR TRIBUTE

Is There Too Much About The Royal Family In The Newspapers? asks top writer **Paul Johnson**

IS THERE too much about the Royal Family in the newspapers?

That is the question I have been asked to write about by the Editor.

Whether £2,000 is sufficient reward for writing such an article, is a matter upon which I have been reflecting for the past ten minutes.

Was it not the great Bagehot-Hall who wrote: "When it comes to matters pertaining to the sovereign monarchy, a degree of mystique is a vital ingredient in the cementing of those ties which bind the institution of royalty to a devoted people."

Bagehot-Hall's words remain as true today as when they were penned over 906 years ago.

Indeed, as I meditate upon them in the pages of the *Oxford Dictionary of Political Anecdotes*, I realise that I could not have put it better myself.

(Is this enough? P.J.)

"Don't worry, Missus, we'll soon have this lot papered over!"

Is The Tabloid Press Getting Out Of Hand? asks **Bill Deedes**

IN RECENT years there has been a lot of comment about the way the so-called gutter press is hounding members of the Royal Family to an early death.

As I look through the cuttings, I see that in 1985 the *Sun* carried the headline LOVE ROMPS ON ROYAL TRAIN SHOCK. Then again, in 1986, the *Daily Star* ran a story headed IS FERGIE GETTING TOO FAT?

In 1987 there was a new twist to the tale. SHOULD THE QUEEN HAVE ALL HER CORGIS PUT DOWN TO SAVE MONEY? asked the *Daily Express*.

Then last year the tabloids plumbed a new low. The *Today* newspaper, I see, ran a story suggesting that the Duke of Gloucester had posed for nude photographs at a gay disco in Alicante. Subsequently, as the cuttings relate, the paper was forced to print a comprehensive apology, admitting that there was not a single jot or tittle of truth in its fabrications.

All I can say is that, when I was a cub reporter on the old *Morning Post* back in the years before the First World War, we would not have dreamed of going in for this kind of sleazy tittle-tattle.

I recall only too well how I was once told that the King himself was enjoying a spot of dalliance with some American divorcée. I realised at once that this was of no importance and was not the kind of thing any journalist would wish to print.

How things have changed. *Tempora mutantur*, indeed.

Why This Thoroughly Modern Marriage Is An Inspiration To The Nation writes **Lesley Garner**

AT FIRST sight they seem an unlikely couple. He is considerably older than his vivacious, unconventional young bride.

Again their interests might seem worlds apart. To one of them, architecture is an abiding passion.

The other is obsessed with goings-on in West End nightclubs such as Tramp.

Yet there is no doubt that the marriage of Sir Peregrine Worsthorne and Lady Lucinda Lamppost has fired the imagination of every living person throughout the globe.

The cynics may say that this marriage is on the rocks. But all right-thinking people must wish the happy couple many more decades to come of candlelit dinners and heavy lunches in the Garrick.

(Don't hurry back — Ed., Sun. Tel.)

Your TV Tonight

WOGAN meets MADONNA

T. WOGAN *(for it is he)*: Tonight I celebrate my millionth programme by interviewing perhaps the biggest female star of all time, the most famous woman in the world. Ladies and gentlemen — Madonna.

(Camera tracks away to reveal huge golden throne, surrounded by cherubim, seraphim etc in adoring poses)

WOGAN *(taking seat on small passing cloud)*: Madonna, you've been at the top now for nearly 2,000 years. Most people would agree that you are the ultimate superstar. You've got everything you have ever wanted — fame, millions of devoted fans, you're a role model for young girls all over the world. And yet there are those who wonder whether you are trapped by this phenomenal success that you've had. I mean, would you have thought, when you were ordinary and unknown like any other kid on the block, that one day you'd have all this power, and success, and fame? So, you're liberated, and you didn't feel you had to get married when you had that much-publicised relationship with Warren Beatty *(surely 'Joseph'? Ed)* but what I really want to know is *(contd p. 94)*

"Won't be a second – I'll just put a record on"

World's fattest man arrives for free event

by Our Music Staff **The Late Wilfred Hyde Park**

THEY WERE building a huge platform last night of reinforced concrete and iron girders in anticipation of the arrival of what is believed to be the world's fattest man in Hyde Park.

The three-ton maestro, Roberto Maxarrotti, whose voice is so loud it can be heard ten miles away without the enhancement of a microphone, is due in Britain tomorrow for what he describes as "a gift to the British people".

Thousands are expected to mass in London to greet the man they call "El Fatidiotti" who has promised that every single person who turns up to see him will receive absolutely free one thousand copies of *The European* newspaper.

Fatarotti is 409 stone.

Dawn of the Grey Warrior

FOR 11 LONG AEONS THE LAND OF ALBION HAD BEEN PLUNGED UNDER THE EVIL SPELL OF THE MAGWITCH OF DOOM. CHAOS AND DARKNESS REIGNED.
TYPICAL. YOU WAIT AGES FOR A BUS AND THEN NONE TURN UP!
BUS STOP
YET IT WAS WRITTEN IN THE DOUBLE ENTRY BOOK THAT ONE WOULD COME TO VANQUISH THE DARK FORCES OF INEFFICIENCY...
LO, IT'S JON THE MAGUS!
EXTREMELY PUNCTUAL!
BANG ON TIME!
OH YES! WITH MY TRUSTY GOBLIN HELPER NORMAN, AND MY SACRED GARTERS OF EMANESS, I SHALL SLAY THE DRAGON!
TAKE THAT, DRAGON!
DOCTOR'S SURGERY
AARGH!
RECEPTIONIST
PUNCH
OH YES! FROM NOW ON, CITIZENS SHALL WAIT AN INCONSIDERABLE PERIOD OF TIME!
NOW FOR EVIL CONEMAN!
BOLDLY HE STOOD ATOP THE CRAG OF ANORAX...
CITIZEN'S CHARTER
....NO MORE SHALL THE OTHER QUEUE MOVE FASTER THAN YOURS! NOR SHALL ANYONE BE STUCK BEHIND THE OLD LADY PAYING IN HER LIFE SAVINGS.., NOR SHALL TOMATO KETCHUP SPURT OUT AT AN UNREASONABLE RATE WHEN YE HAVE SHAKEN THE BOTTLE!
YEA! THE POWER OF THE CONSUMER HAS RETURNED.
JUST A SHAME EVERYONE'S TOO BROKE TO EXERCISE IT. USELESS GIT!
BE OFF WITH YOU CONEMAN THE BARBARIAN, OR I SHALL SMITE YOU WITH THE MAGIC FORCES OF EXTENDED ACCOUNTABILITY!
DELAYS UNTIL 7A.M.
AARGH! IT'S A WIDE RANGING AND COMPREHENSIVE INITIATIVE!!
HEROICALLY HE CONTINUED ON HIS QUEST!
REMEMBER, A SMILE COSTS NOTHING.
RIGHTS OF REDRESS SHALL PREVAIL!
WE APOLOGISE FOR THE DELAY. THIS IS DUE TO COMPENSATION FORMS ON THE LINE

HEIR OF SORROWS

BY

SYLVIE KRIN

THE STORY SO FAR: Charles is on a painting holiday at Balmoral Castle, when he is interrupted by an unexpected visitor.

Now read on...

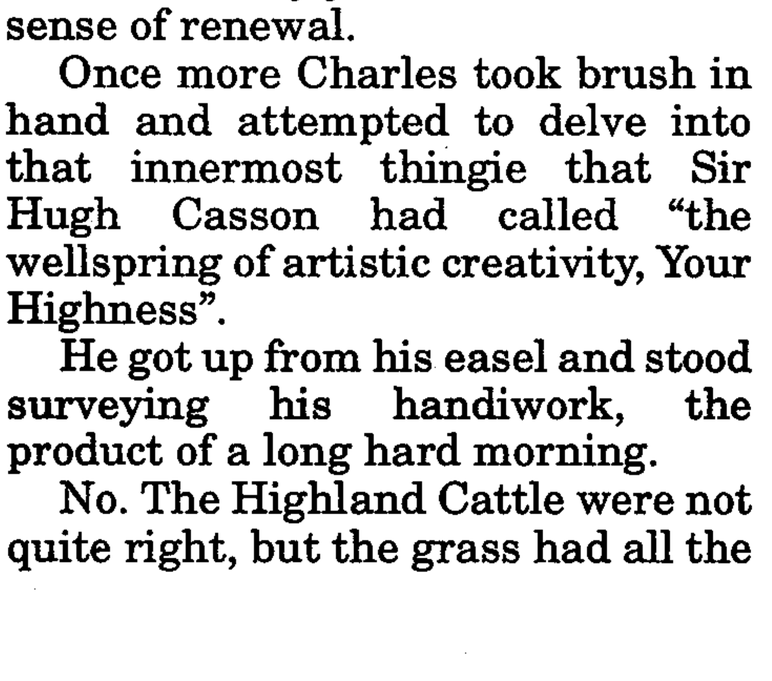
CHARLES sat by the leaded window of the Saxe-Coburg Room in the Macbeth Wing and gazed at the purple heather-clad slopes of Ben Elton and, in the distance the sparkling surface of Loch Jaw. He watched in rapture as the lesser bald-headed heron swooped upon the unsuspecting herring as they lay basking in the shallow *(Get on with it. Ed.)*

Ah, to be at peace in the remote solitude! Every year he felt the same sense of renewal.

Once more Charles took brush in hand and attempted to delve into that innermost thingie that Sir Hugh Casson had called "the wellspring of artistic creativity, Your Highness".

He got up from his easel and stood surveying his handiwork, the product of a long hard morning.

No. The Highland Cattle were not quite right, but the grass had all the right sort of feel about it. And the sky — still drying — was certainly the right shade of blue — or near enough.



Once he got the cattle right it would definitely be one for his new book of water-colours, to be published in the autumn by Sir Christopher Hamish, the director of the highly respected firm of Hamish & Hamish.

That very afternoon the venerable white-haired figure of Sir Christopher was due at Balmoral, along with Charles's agent Sir Gordon Giles. Together they would make the final selection for his book *The Collected Water-Colours of HRH Prince Charles: A Catalogue Raisonné of Very Wonderful Works of Art with a Foreword by Sir Hugo Munnings, President of the London Academy of Art.*

Charles was about to do something about the cattle when there was a knock at the door and Sir Alan Fitztightly eased himself into the tartan-wallpapered chamber.

"I'm sorry to disturb you, Sir, but you have a visitor."

Charles raised an eyebrow.

"Not Sir Christopher already!"

"No, Sir," soothed his portly factotum. "They're not due for another hour. You won't have forgotten that you have kindly consented to select the pictures for the South Aberdeenshire Society of Water-Colourists, whose annual exhibition we hold in the grounds?"

Charles dried his brush and sighed.

"Oh, yes, of course. Do show... er... whoever it is in."

As he waited for his visitor he was reminded ineluctably of the words of his old friend and mentor Sir Laurens van der Post in his seminal treatise *The Jason Donovan Songbook*: "The mother eagle must teach the nestlings to fly."

How true that was. How very true! And here indeed was the nestling herself.

"Good morning, Mrs McVitie! I trust you and the Minister are keeping well?"

The tweed-clad matron of the Manse smiled politely and deposited a bulky portfolio on the floor.

"It really is most awfully kind of you to give us your valuable advice, Sir, and to offer the benefit of your vast experience."

Charles beamed as he watched the buxom doyenne busily extracting veritable sheaves of pictures from her leather case. She began to place them around the room.

"This study of Kolynos is by our

new schoolmaster, Mr Rory McRory. He goes there every year for his holiday with his young organist friend Jamie. The fishing boats look very real, don't they?"

"Indeed they do." Charles tried to look appreciatively at Mr McRory's effort. Considering the man was clearly self-taught and had not had the benefit of Sir Hugh Casson's tutelage, it was not quite as appalling as it might have been.

"And this charming study will be bound to appeal to you, Your Highness!"

Charles walked to the mantelpiece, where Mrs McVitie had placed another picture against the priceless Fabergé embonpoint — a gift to Queen Victoria from Count Nicolai the Irrepressible of Russia.

"You'll recognise it of course!" Mrs McVitie boomed in her strident Scottish brogue. "Balmoral Castle at twilight. Mrs Ellsworth-Jones has captured the little flag on the turrets with great skill, would you not say?"

Once again Charles was forced to agree. The woman in question was presumably an amateur, but her Highland Cattle looked quite lifelike.

"Ahem!" Sir Alan coughed discreetly from behind the bookcase where he had been waiting patiently in attendance. "I think perhaps it is time for you to change, Your Highness. Sir Christopher Hamish will be with you shortly. If Mrs McVitie will step this way... We will, of course, take great care of those splendid efforts."

"WHAT perfectly splendid efforts!" The familiar tones of Sir Christopher Hamish greeted Charles as he paused, now suitably attired in full evening dress, on the threshold of the Saxe-Coburg Room.

"Quite remarkable!" came the answering echo from Sir Gordon Giles. "I would call it a masterpiece."

Charles entered delightedly only to find his two distinguished guests from London earnestly admiring the work of the South Aberdeenshire Society of Water-Colourists.

"But no... you see... er..." he protested.

Sir Gordon came forward, his hand outstretched.

"No need for modesty, Sire. I really must congratulate you," he beamed. "Your new work for our book is quite outstanding. This one we found on the mantelpiece by the embonpoint. It's perfectly brilliant. You can almost see the flag moving!"

To be continued

Why I did nothing — Leigh-Pemberton's shock lame excuse

by Our Man In The City
Fred Needle

THE GOVERNOR of the Bank of England, Sir Robin People-Blind, today hit out at critics who accused him of inactivity over the now discredited Bank of Commerce and Credit International. "It is easy to be wise after the event," said Britain's banking supremo.

"But when Mr Al Kruk and his partners approached us, they had a perfectly standard investment policy. As I remember it, it followed standard bank practice as laid down by myself, ie to loan large sums of other people's money to anyone who came off the street without asking too many questions."

Looking relaxed and shifty, Mr People-Blind joked with reporters. "If I had closed down BCCI on those grounds, then I would have had to close down all the other banks as well."

He then produced what he called "positive proof" to justify his lack of action over the bank. This consisted of a brochure detailing the various facilities offered by the bank to its investors, which were as follows:

- **Top Interest Terrorist Account, "The Nidal". 372% (Interest paid every day).**
- **High Interest Drug Smuggling Account, "The Launderama". 371% (Interest paid every other day).**
- **Quite High Interest Personal Friends of the Management Account, "The Matey". 370% (Interest paid when we've got a bit extra).**
- **Extra Low Asian Businessman Account, "The Sucker". 1% (Interest paid every five hundred years, if you're lucky).**

"You've left the car off the petrol cap"

Day 17 of the great BBC1 Fraud Scandal

Big Names Benefited From Pay-Outs

by Our Fraud Staff **Kenneth Fleet-Street-Porter**

"SIX-FIGURE payments" were made to a number of household names, as part of the "biggest rip-off" in the history of the world, it was alleged today.

It now seems clear that, while millions of innocent "punters" paid in small sums annually to the BBC1, they got nothing back for their investment. Meanwhile, huge sums were being "creamed off" by top BBC1 employees and placed in private bank accounts.

Blowing The Birt Whistle

Among the top names who have been "cashing in" on the BBC1 fraud are:

● **Mr Terence Wogan, 52, an Irish-born public relations executive whose name has recently been linked with the notorious US Madonna organisation.**

● **"Sir" Peter Jaybotham, 53, an unemployed former ambassador and one-time "fixer" for the international "businessman" Roberto Maxwell.**

● **Peter Sissons, 44, a former newsreader with Channel Four who took over a key post in BBC1 when the much-respected Sir Robin Day mysteriously disappeared.**

● **"Pretty Polly" Toynbee, 54, hatchet-faced so-called "Social Affairs Editor".**

All these senior employees of BBC1, it is alleged, have for years been receiving large pay-outs without having to give "value for money" to the organisation which underwrote their lavish lifestyle.

Shock

It is widely believed that the master-mind behind the BBC1 conspiracy was a quiet, bespectacled, Armani-suited "media consultant", John Birt, 43, who moved in top political circles and was frequently photographed in the company of world figures, such as Mrs Thatcher, David Frost and Melvyn Bragg.

Meanwhile, millions of ordinary "investors" in the now-discredited company were yesterday talking of how they have been left "shattered" and "bewildered" by the revelations that BBC1 was nothing but a fraud.

Said one viewer: "For years we have been hoping for some interest in return for our licence fees — but we never saw anything of any interest at all."

Sir Marmalade "Duke" Gussett, Chairman of the beleaguered company, was unavailable for comment at his Dorset home.

Yes, It's Ken Russell Rhyming Slang!

Whore	**Terrific bore**
Women In Love	**See above**
Russell, Ken	**Same again**
Bartok	**Load of cock**
Bio pics	**Naked pricks**
Inspired cutting	**Lots of rutting**
Gothic	**Even more dick**
Liszt	**One to be missed**
Elgar	**Worst by far**
Compared to Orson Welles	**Pull the other one, it's got bells**

(That's enough slang. Ed.)

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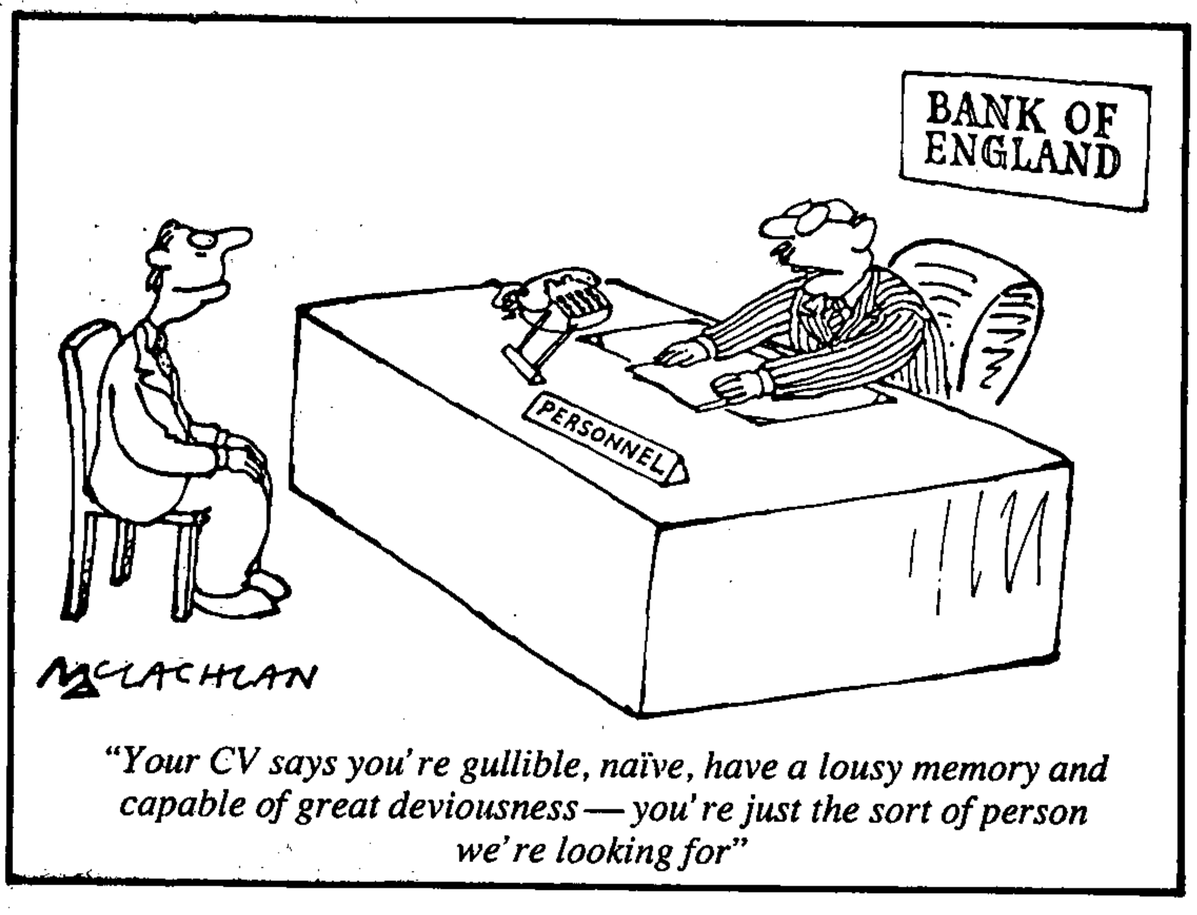
2 AUGUST 1991 ● **THE SUNDAY TIMES**

TOP TEN BORES

This Week		Last Week	Weeks on List
1	**Madonna**	3	312
2	**Terry Wogan**	–	576
3	**David Thomas** *(who he?)*	–	–
4	**Harold Pinter**	1	7,908
5	**HRH Prince Charles**	–	47
6	**Julian Barnes**	–	–
7	**Conor Cruise O'Brien**	8	603
8	**Mrs Teresa Gorman**	5	72
9	**Anthony Burgess**	7	1,206
10	**Nigel Mansell**	–	32



"Your CV says you're gullible, naïve, have a lousy memory and capable of great deviousness — you're just the sort of person we're looking for"

Names of town, district council chairmen and their vices released

Malawi Daily Times

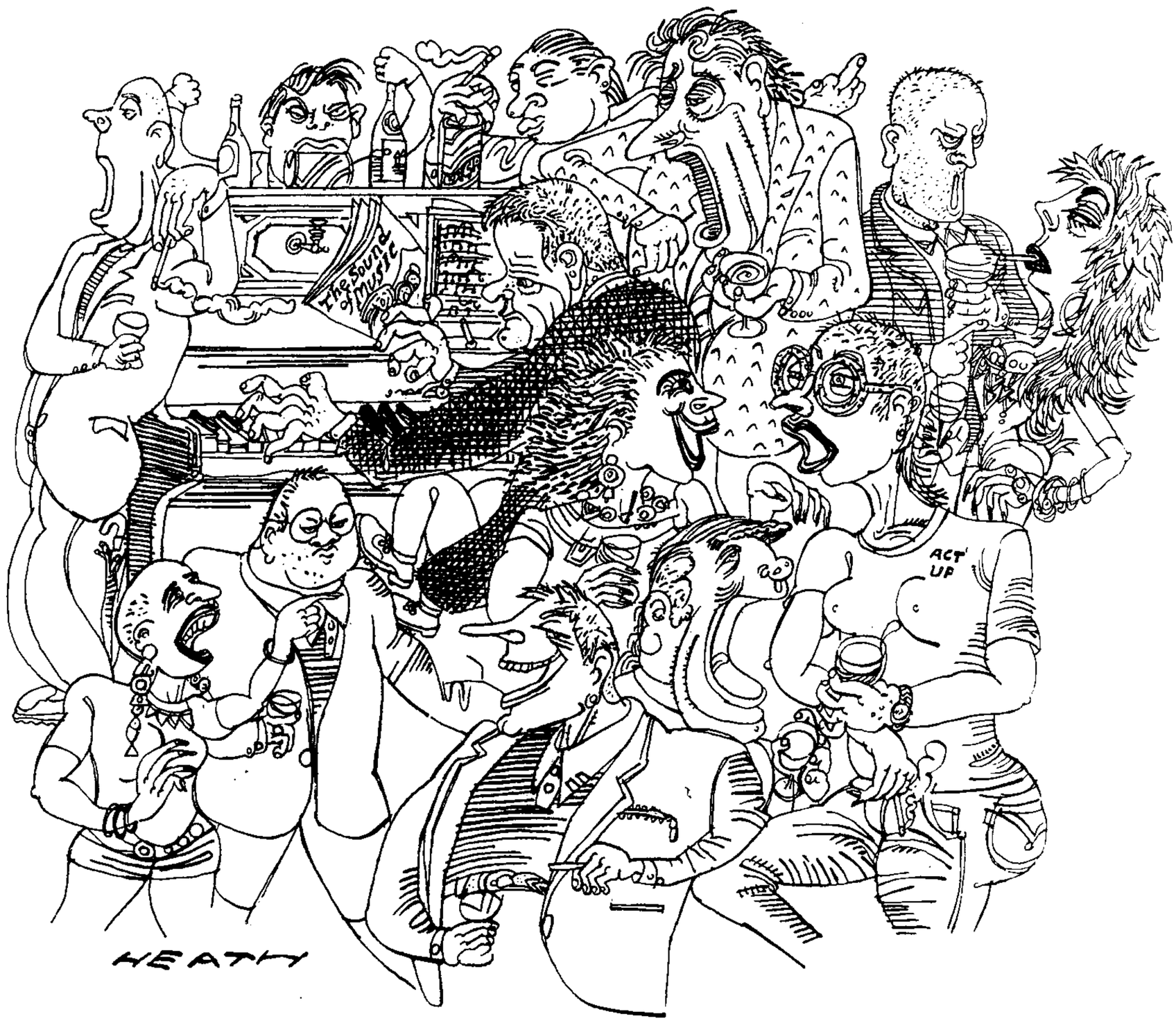
EXCLUSIVE TO PRIVATE EYE

CEDRIC SPART, Chair of H.A.N.D.B.A.G. (Homosexuals Advocating Naming Distinguished Bisexuals And Gays) exclusively names Britain's Top 20 Closet Gays in the most sensational "outing" of all time.

IT IS totally necessary that gays occupying prominent positions in public life should repay their debt to the gay community as a whole who are in need of positive role models... er... and therefore we have no hesitation but to follow our American cosexualists in fearlessly and relentlessly hounding gays in public life in a manner reminiscent of the tabloids at their very worst *(shurely shome mishtake?)*

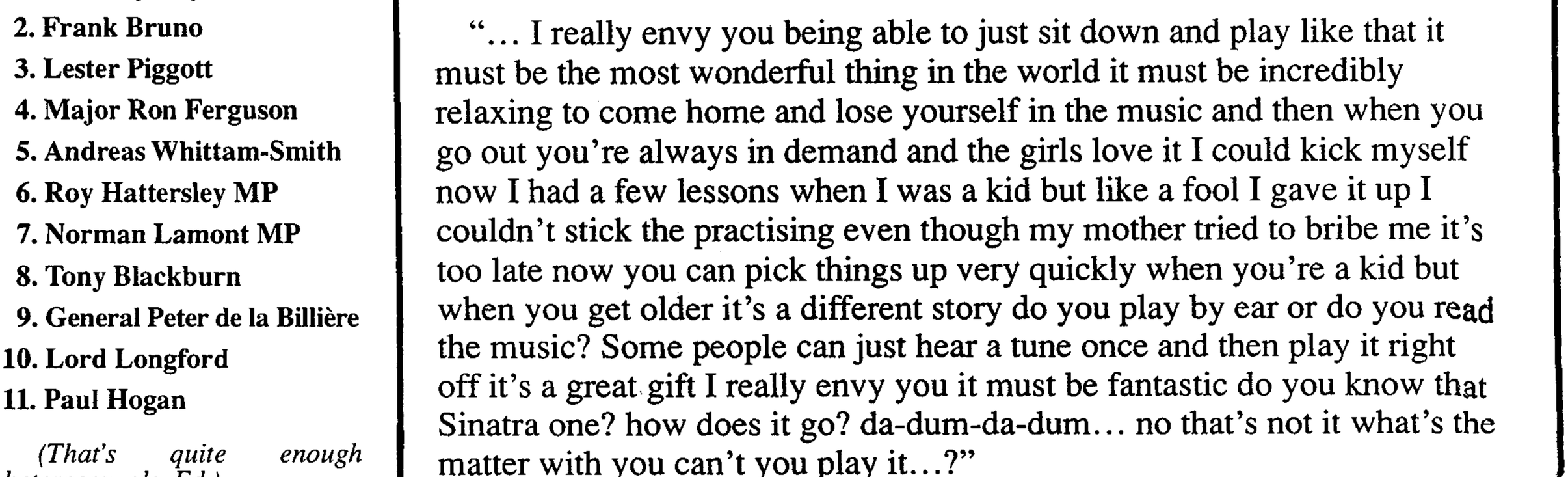
1. **Geoffrey Boycott**
2. **Frank Bruno**
3. **Lester Piggott**
4. **Major Ron Ferguson**
5. **Andreas Whittam-Smith**
6. **Roy Hattersley MP**
7. **Norman Lamont MP**
8. **Tony Blackburn**
9. **General Peter de la Billière**
10. **Lord Longford**
11. **Paul Hogan**

(That's quite enough heterosexuals. Ed.)



Great Bores Of Today.

"... I really envy you being able to just sit down and play like that it must be the most wonderful thing in the world it must be incredibly relaxing to come home and lose yourself in the music and then when you go out you're always in demand and the girls love it I could kick myself now I had a few lessons when I was a kid but like a fool I gave it up I couldn't stick the practising even though my mother tried to bribe me it's too late now you can pick things up very quickly when you're a kid but when you get older it's a different story do you play by ear or do you read the music? Some people can just hear a tune once and then play it right off it's a great gift I really envy you it must be fantastic do you know that Sinatra one? how does it go? da-dum-da-dum... no that's not it what's the matter with you can't you play it...?"


WHAT YOU DOING, GARY?
TAI-CHI, MATE. THE ANCIENT ART OF STABILISING AND HARMONISING THE BODY'S LIFE FORCES.
THRUST
SWING
SWING
THESE GENTLE YET DYNAMIC MOVEMENTS CAN BE AN EFFECTIVE WAY OF DEALING WITH THE STRESSES AND PRESSURES OF INTERNATIONAL STARDOM.
SWIVEL
TWIST
BY DOING THIS I FEEL COOL, CALM AND COMPLETELY IN CONTROL WHEN I GO OUT TO FACE THE WORLD.
GLIDE
LANGAN'S BRASSERIE
FLASH

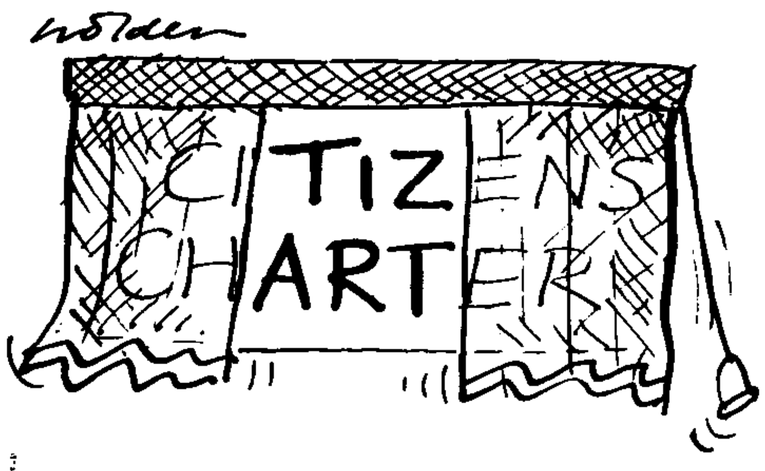
The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Monday

This is the biggest week I have had since I became Prime Minister. First of all I have been chosen to be the host of something called the G7 meeting and I will finally unveil my Citizen's Charter which everyone has been looking forward to for many months.

I must admit that I had never heard of the "G-7" until Mr Hurd told me that it was happening in London this year, and that it was my big chance to shine on the world stage in time for the next election. I had to ask him why it was called G-7. It sounds a bit like the M6 or those garages called Q8, I said to him. Mr Hurd handed me a glossy brochure which had my picture on the front with the words JOHN MAJOR WILKOMMEN DU AUS GROSSE BRITANNIEN. "It's all in here," he said. "You can have a quick look and then pass it on to Herr Kohl when he arrives in five minutes time."

Before I had had time to get out my *Tourist German In Five Minutes* phrase book, Mr O'Donnell was ushering me out into Downing Street where there were hundreds of photographers, cameramen and security guards. At that moment 26 huge black cars drew up and out stepped Mr Bush, Mr Kohl, Mr Mitterrand, a Japanese gentleman whose name I did not know, and various other important-looking people from all over the world. When I had had my photograph taken shaking hands with them all, they went off to the hotels where they



were staying, which was just as well, since I still had some finishing touches to put to my Citizen's Charter.

Tuesday

This morning I was in no small measure pleased, not to mention surprised, to see that all the newspapers had headlines such as MAJOR G-7 SUMMIT TRIUMPH, with pictures of me shaking hands with Mr Bush and the others.

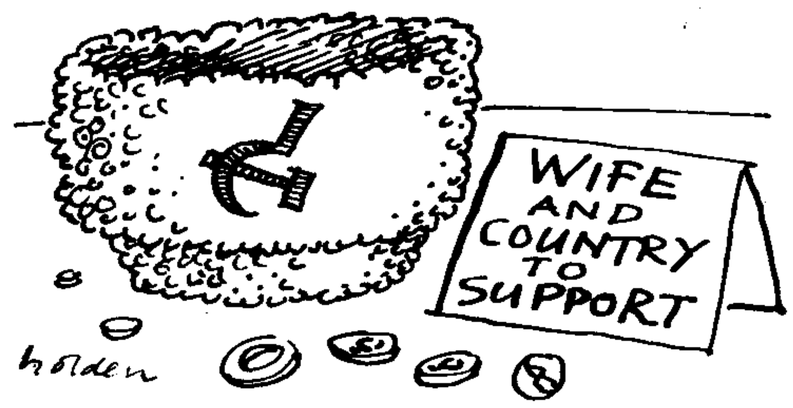
When my wife Norman looked over my shoulder she asked "What does G-7 mean, John? You still haven't explained." "Well, it's rather complicated," I told her. "You know those garages called Q8? It is rather the same sort of idea." Then I gave her a copy of Mr Hurd's brochure so that she could work it out for herself.

After breakfast, I was taken in a big car to a very important looking building called Marlborough House, near Buckingham Palace. When I got there, there was a huge table with all our names written on special plaques and the flags of all the countries so that everyone could see where we came from. Once again there were hundreds of photographers taking pictures, but after a few minutes they were all sent out of the room, the doors were closed and Mr Bush said: "OK, John boy, let's get down to business. What's on the menu for the first session?" Everyone was looking at me, rather like we used to look at Mrs Thatcher in the Cabinet in the old days, before she went off her head and gave me her job. Fortunately, when I opened my briefcase I found all the notes I had been writing on the Citizen's Charter, which gave me a brilliant idea for something to talk about. I explained to them what the Charter was all about, and suggested that perhaps we could have a charter for all the citizens of the world. It could deal with such matters as what happens when your baggage is sent on by the airline to another country. As things stand, the citizen has no redress about this type of mistake when it occurs across international boundaries.

When I had finished, there was a long silence which went on for a considerable period of time. Obviously they were all thinking carefully about the implications of my revolutionary proposal.

Wednesday

This morning, when we were having our next meeting round the big table, the doors were suddenly flung open and in came Mr Gorbachev. "I do not come hat in hand, gentlemen," he said. "No, it is on your head as usual," quipped Mr Bush, just as if he was Bob Hope. It seemed that Mr Gorbachev had come to borrow some money, since his country had run out. But Mr Hurd whispered to me that it had all been agreed beforehand we were not going to give him any. He then gave me a piece of paper headed "Read this out to Gorby in your special firm voice", which I did. What it said was that Russia would have to put its house in



order before we could give them any cash, but that if President Gorbachev was interested in a photo-opportunity, this had been arranged for after our meeting, and could he please wait outside.

Afterwards Mr Gorbachev had his picture taken with all the other world leaders, and I was allowed to sit in the middle.

Thursday

Now that all the presidents and prime ministers have gone home, I can finally get down to the really important business of the week, the launching of my Citizen's Charter.

I was amused to see a lot of articles saying that the Charter had been "watered down", no doubt inspired by the Labour party. Oh, no. As everyone would see, it had been very considerably toughened up, and in my judgement it has more teeth than anything the government managed to do under Mrs Thatcher. For example, there is a whole new section laying down that in future all civil servants will have to wear name-tabs saying who they are, and when they answer the telephone to members of the public they will have to say "Have a nice day."

Also we are appealing to commercial firms to step forward to sponsor much-loved army regiments which Mr King might otherwise have to shut down. When I gave my friend Chris a "sneak preview" of this bit, he said: "Good thinking, Prime Minister. So in future it will be the NatWest Household Cavalry and the Hoffmeister Lager Light Infantry?" "Yes," I said to him in my firm voice. "What is wrong with that?"

After lunch I again had to use my firm voice in the House of Commons, when Mr Kinnock tried to catch me out about the bank that Mr Leigh-Pemberton had to close down because it had run out of money (like Mr Gorbachev). Mr Kinnock accused me of telling a lie. I was so angry that for a very considerable period of time I could not think of anything to say. Then I had an inspiration. "If you say that, it just shows that you wouldn't be any good at being Prime Minister." Everyone cheered when I said this.

Friday

The papers this morning had huge headlines saying: TORIES SET TO WIN ELECTION AS MAJOR KOS KINNOCK.

The Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94. A Service Of Commination Against The Supply Of Free Milk Powder To The Third World

The President *(for it is he or she)*: Brethren and sistren, we are gathered here today to pronounce anathema upon a most grievous evil which has recently been drawn to our attention by the *Guardian* newspaper.

EXPLANATORY READING FROM THE GRAUNIAD (OR IT MAY BE THE INDEPENDENT)

And, lo, there came into the lands of Africa men bringing the milk product known as Nest-lé, and they said: "Behold, we shall present unto thee this milk as an gift." And from that moment all the mothers became barren and were no longer able to give suck. And hereinafter the men of Nest-lé had an active market for their products. And there was much wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The President: Inasmuch as we may bear witness against this most grievous affliction which has been laid on the inhabitants of the Third World, let us declare our solemn intention to renounce the Nestlé and all its works.

(Here he will hold aloft a suitable container)

President: Do you renounce this jar of Nescafé Gold Blend?

Congregation: We renounce it.

President: Do you renounce the Blend 37?

Congregation: We renounce it for all eternity.

President: Do you renounce the Alta Rica?

Congregation: Oh, is this a new line?

President: Yes, have you not seen the commercials? They are rather good.

PREPARATION OF THE ARTICLES TO BE RENOUNCED BY THE CONGREGATION

The Congregation will now bring forward their tins and jars to be placed upon the altar for renunciation. The Congregation shall then gather at the back of the worship area for tea and biscuits.

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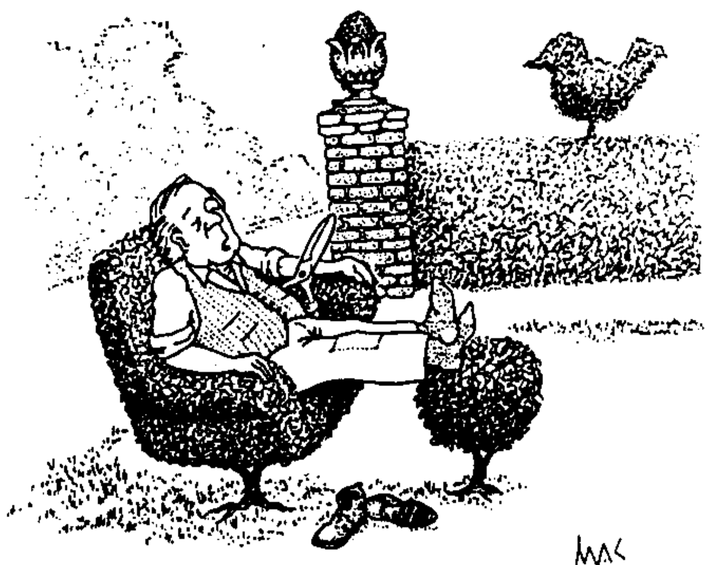


£1,950. 'V' Fiat X19 Sports car, requiring attention £750. 'T' Ford Escort 1.1L, £475. Lots of cheaper cars! All usual dealer facilities! Hire cars £17.50 daily, all in ! University Autos, Occupation Road, Cambridge, phone 313400 or 67774! Millie (that's Jonny's mum) an ex Kite resident also lost her part time cleaning job at WW offals' restaurant when City Council demolished the whole area to make way for the Grafton Centre! Now that she has heard about the proposed development on New Street / East Roadarea she is livid! She says this time it's Jonny's job on the line! She is asking all those who live or work in this area to attend the public meeting on Tuesday, February 6th, at 7.00pm, at Howard Mallets Club and oppose to this senseless devastation! She say's she don't want any more Grafton Centre or shops that sell £1.25 Cornish pasties! or £10 a day car parks! She wants to work for the community not for London developers!.

Cambridge Evening News

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

From Sir Herbert Gussett

SIR—Once again your correspondence columns are about to be filled with your readers' observations of those intriguing and mysterious phenomena known as "corn circles". Here in this part of the West Country, anticipation has been running high for many months as to what astonishing new surprises our extra-terrestrial friends may have in store for us this "Crop Circle-tide", as the months of July and August are now known in country parlance.

This year, a group of us recently decided that it was time to get to the bottom of this so-called mystery once and for all. What was called for was a full-scale military-style operation, to ensure round-the-clock monitoring of all possible "circle" sites within a predetermined radius of some central point, such as the Lamb & Flag public house in our village, clearly marked on the Ordnance Survey 1½ kilometres to the Centimetre Landrover Map, just between "Area Of Outstanding Prehistoric Interest" and "Start of Nature Heritage Trail 76a". Thus it was that "Operation Desert Corn", as we codenamed it, came to be born.

Our "Corn Watch" began at 1900 hours in the Lamb & Flag, with a full briefing session from the head of the Monitoring Unit, Col. Frobisher. Equipment was checked, and was as follows: 1 Nautical Torch (ex-US Navy) with Halogen Beam; 1 cassette tape-recorder (kindly loaned by Rev. Purves); 1 50x70 "Stargazer" telescope (kindly loaned by Master Dean Purves, aged 11); 24 bts Very Fine Western Isles "Cashgone" Whisky ("A wee dram afore your bawbees gang doon the drain"); 6 pkts Smoked - Salmon - Flavoured Tortilla Chips; 1 syphon Soda Water.

At 2305 hours, on the word from our host Mr Montague Balon, "time gentlemen please", the Monitoring Committee, now in good heart and suitably fortified for the hard task that lay ahead of us, set out along Portillo's Lane to climb to our chosen vantage point on the brow of the ancient Iron Age encampment known as Trusthouse Fort. Here our watch began.

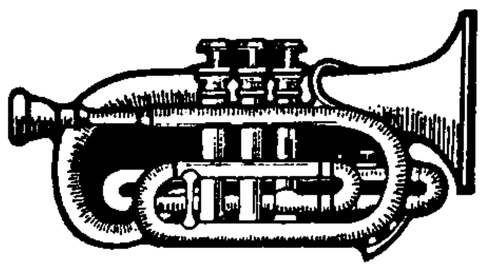
For the first two hours there was little to report and we were very grateful for the provisioning laid on by Mr Balon which greatly assisted in keeping at bay the growing chill of the night. Then, quite suddenly, an extraordinary sequence of events began to unfold. Each of us, quite separately, experienced a strange sense of disembodiment, as if we were floating several inches above the ground. Simultaneously, curious lights and flashes were visible, so close to us that they were quite dazzling. We both distinctly had the impression that the world was revolving around us in a way that can only be described as terrifying. To steady our nerves at the sight of these unnerving phenomena, both Buffy and I quickly consumed the remainder of our supplies, and shortly afterwards we both experienced what can only be described as a total blackout.

It was the following day before the mysterious effects of whatever "power" had been at work finally wore off. My co-monitor and I found that somehow, during the night, we had been bodily transported from our vantage point at the top of the hill to the middle of a large field of growing wheat situated directly below where we had been carrying out our investigation. What makes my blood run cold, even as I write, is the recollection of what we then observed. The corn was totally flattened, in a geometrically precise straight line, from the edge of the field right up to the very spot where we ourselves had been lying. Upon a rigorous inspection, the stalks of the corn were seen to be bent over, horizontal to the ground, as if by some electro-magnetic force, or even some agency as yet unknown to science.

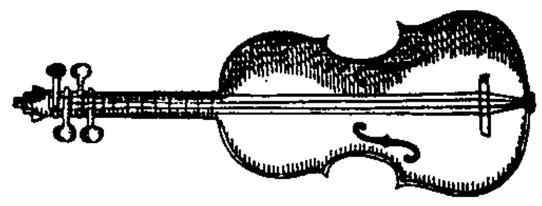
Your readers may wish to offer their own explanations as to what caused the corn to be flattened in this unearthly fashion. Some cynics may even be disposed to dismiss what happened in Farmer Lycett Green's barley field last Saturday night as a mere "hoax". But nothing can shake the solemn conviction of Col. Frobisher and myself that what we witnessed was anything else than an attempt to "get through" to the inhabitants of Earth by the doomed citizens of the Planet Krypton in Galaxy X-1743.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

SIR HERBERT GUSSETT
"Oddbins"
Castle Maine
Wilts 4 XXXX.



SUMMER FESTIVAL GUIDE



Highlights

Lymeswold Literary Festival

August 29-31

Sunday 7.30. An Evening with Anne Robinson (Corn Exchange).

Monday 8.00. The Lymeswold Lecture — "Writing for Radio" by Frank Muir (Joan Bakewell Theatre).

Exhibition of cartoons from his new book, *Abattoir*, by Ralph Stoddy throughout at the Old Lighthouse Gallery.

Worsthorne-on-Sea Music Festival

September 3-27

Sunday 8.00. Sinfonia di Croatia. Works by Brodnik, Hertz, Weintraub and Badhat, conducted by Mystislav Weidenfeld (Corn Exchange).

Tuesday 8.00. Parker Bowles String Quartet. Derek Parker-Bowles (violin), Marjorie Parker-Bowles (violin), Sebastian Parker-Bowles (viola), Nicholas Ridley (cello). Programme to be announced (Corn Exchange).

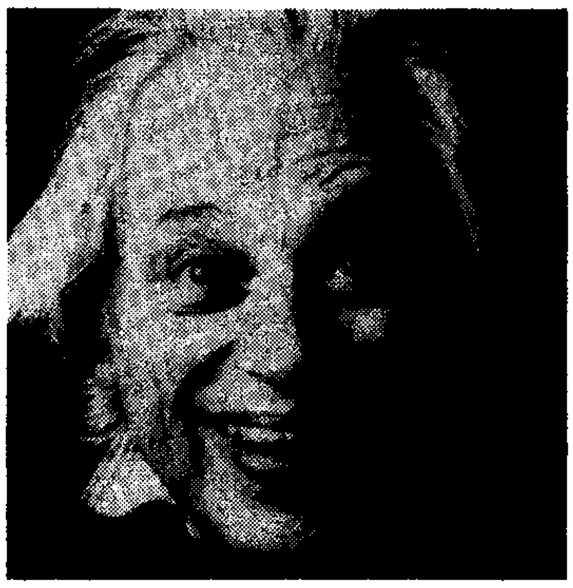
Wednesday, September 7, 7.30. Musica Antica di Antarctica. Works by Semprini, Mantovani & Liberace (The Old Boathouse).

Saturday, September 17, 8.00. "The Joint Is Jumping" with George Melly & The Headbangers *(shurely 'Feet-warmers'? Ed)*. (The Lamb & Flag, Railway Road)

Newport Pagnell Jazz Festival

August 3-19

Includes Blind Lemon Shandy Levine; Terry Teakettle & The Toetappers; Don Beard (piano) & The Don Beard Quartet: Mel Calman (tenor sax), Jack Hobbs (drums), Michael Horovitz (kazoo). Introducing the Newport Pagnell All-Stars under the direction of Ray Ambrose. *(That's enough festivals. Ed.)*



Terry Teakettle
(see Newport Pagnell)

Exclusive to Private Eye

That Saddam Medical Shopping List in full

Private Eye has obtained á copy of a top-secret fax sent by President Saddam Hussein to the Ministry of Defence on 31 January 1991.

31 — JAN — 91 10:20 BAGHDAD KILL 1

From: S. HUSSEIN
To: My friends at the MoD
Sheet: 1 of 1

Please supply medical goods as follows:

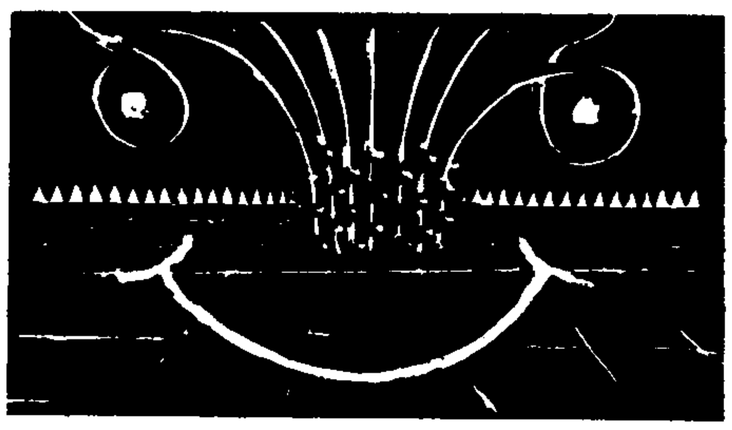
1 packet Soluble Aspirin
1 bot. Night Nurse (lemon flavour)
1 tin Elastoplast (waterproof)
2 oz. Pure Plutonium (for hayfever)
1 box Finest Uranium (for toothpaste manufacture)
1 Full-Size Nuclear Reactor (for production of mosquito repellent. Proposed brand-name "BUSHGON!")
3 Multiple Warhead Nuclear Missiles (for use in Dental Floss programme)
1 box Rinstead Pastilles (blackcurrant)
3 million tons Toxic Gas (for local anaesthetics in Kurdish hospitals).

Thanking you for your kind consideration.

Sadd

This looks fine by me - get on with it pronto.
Alan Clarke

DIARY



MADONNA

Okay, so my life's a very private thing, like I'm coming to terms with religion in a big way just now and that's a very private thing and I want to make it as public as I can so as to help others in my situation, right?

I'm an artist, I'm obsessed, I put all of myself into my work. Like, my new song, *Whoo! Touch My Sex!* is basically about my struggle to come to terms with my childhood, and the Roman Catholic church and my obsessions with guilt and with insecurity, and it represents one of my most complex statements of self-revelation so far. So the lyric goes:

I wanna screw you, screw you
All thru the nite, nite
Wanna get thru to you
Let's do it right, right

(Chorus) Whoo! Touch my sex! Touch my sex!

That's outasight
Whoo! Touch my sex! Touch my sex!
Turn on my life!

Well, I'm delving very deep into myself there, I'm exploring my unconscious paranoias in a way I've never allowed myself before, and I think it represents like a very clear and positive statement about the way I am now, you know, and I think that should help a lot of people who are still searching, I guess we're all searching for something.

I'm at present devoting my emotional and artistic resources towards creating an ambient stage environment for my next World Tour. Like, I'm obsessed with black at the moment, like it means night and death and mystery and pepsi, right? So we're gonna start off with just this black curtain, and the black curtain will rise to reveal a stage totally black, okay? And then I'll be carried on by these six black guys, right? And I'll be dressed all in black with black hair and a black mask, and the thing is no one in the audience will know I'm even on stage for over forty minutes so it'll be like church or something and then I'll sing my new number, *Spank My Butt (All Day Long)* and it'll be like Picasso and Dali and Bosch and the Pope and Sigmund Freud all rolled into one, just incredibly powerful and traumatic.

People are always wanting to know about my art collection. It's a very private collection, very personal. I mean it means a lot to me so I don't want to open it up to the world, know what I mean?, but I have a Dali, and I have a Daily too, she helps me clean up, and I have a Picasso of a cup of tea, from his Brew Period I suppose, and I have a really beautiful Frida Kahlo of a nostril with a spider in it and another outasight one by Frida Kahlo of a woman's hand with its fingers chopped off and ants all over it which is like a really positive image for all women and gays. I guess Frida was just too beautiful for this world, you know.

My real favourite artist at the moment is a guy from years back, Italian like me, called René Sonce, like he painted lots of Jesuses on the Cross and Jesuses as a baby and angels and blah blah and he painted literally hundreds of the other Madonna, the one before me, in fact it was René Sonce who made the other Madonna into a big deal, like before he discovered her she couldn't sing and you never see pictures of her even dancing, like I guess her career had a setback what with that baby, but René saw through all that bullshit and he made her into a really big star, like you see his pictures of her in every gallery in the world and she's not even dressed that great, like maybe she had a weight problem. The pressures on her from fans must have been amazing, and she most likely had to learn to come to terms with herself, so I identify with her one helluva lot, though as far as I know she never produced a video, lousy marketing department I guess.

I was giving a rare interview the other day and I said to the interviewer, I can only spare another ten minutes, you know, I've got three more rare interviews to give before I have my shredded carrot for lunch, then I got my two-hour workout, and then there's another four rare interviews before I become an essentially very private person all over again for a photographer from *People* magazine. So he says, "Tell me about the hidden Madonna, the Madonna nobody knows, the very private and reclusive Madonna, the Madonna who's alone in her apartment with her fears and obsessions," and I say, "Jeez, that's the side of Madonna I keep from the world, the side that was totally wrecked by my marriage to Sean Penn, the side that is coming to terms with Catholic guilt feelings, the side that can't seem to hold down a conventional relationship because she feels so open to misunderstanding, the side whose whole private life is in a constant state of disarray, the side that couldn't handle Warren Beatty looking at other women, the side that feels the need for reassurance from the public yet is always at the same time in retreat, you wanna know about that side?" And the interviewer, he says, yeah, tell us about that side of Madonna, and I say, "I'm sorry, I never talk to anyone about that side, it's totally, totally, *totally* private." Like, otherwise, your whole life becomes public property, you know?

I've been designing my own costume for my next video to accompany my new single, *Pump Your Stuff, Big Boy*. I've gone for a complete change of image to reflect a whole new outlook in my emotional and spiritual development.

When I recorded my massive worldwide hit, *Let My Fingers Feel Your Body (Krishna Krishna)*, I was really into Zen Buddhism, and my stage costume — a leather G-string with spiked brassiere and fishnet tights — seemed to draw on this very Eastern approach to my religious fears and obsessions.

Then I was seriously into feminist studies and the role of oppressed woman in the 20th century when my next big hit, *Find Me a Guy (Who Wants Me Bad)*, came out, so I changed my costume to present a positive image for women everywhere — a rubber bondage-style body-stocking with high heels.

Finally, I was reading up a helluva lot on vegetarianism in the 1990s, and I wanted to make a strong pro-vegetarian statement, so I recorded my biggest hit yet, *Suck! Suck! Suck! (You're Mine Tonite*, wearing a specially designed costume of lurex brassiere and suede thong.

Pump Your Stuff, Big Boy is basically about the insanity of celebrity and the urban nightmare of 21st century society, and to express this in costume I have had Gaultier make me something totally different, like a real break with the past. It's an all-black PVC cling-shirt with leather straps, and it exposes a sexual side of my art and my personality which I have previously been too insecure to portray before. It's an entirely new me — obsessive, reclusive, concerned and very, very private.

'Animals will suffer if abattoir closes'

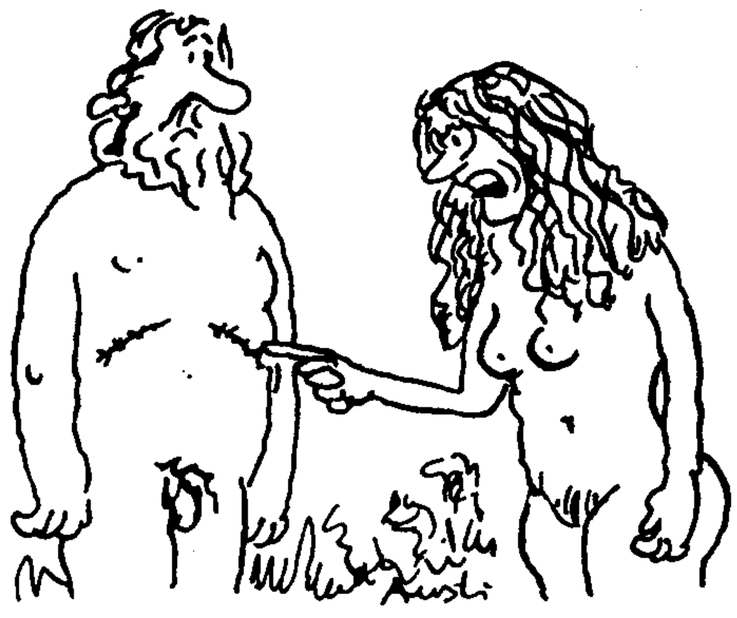
Gravesend Evening Post

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday Evenings
— Uwe Fock entertains on the Organ in the Dining Room

Advertisement in Niugini Nius (Papua New Guinea)

'Floppy Dikke' mag niet

Algemeen Dagblad (Holland)



"I knew it! There's another woman"

Literary Review

Chanel tunnel vision

Out to Lunch
Tania Kindersley
(Bantam, £13.99)

OTHERWISE entirely insignificant, *Out to Lunch* represents a new low in high society publishing.

Its 24-year-old author, as the *Sunset Times Stuff and Nonsense* section obsequiously explained, is one of the Guinnesses, "the legendary Irish dynasty, who all possess added froth and reassuringly large bank balances". She has no other visible qualification for authorship. *Out to Lunch* is dimwitted to a fabulous degree. It very nearly comes out the other side into being positively captivating for its brainlessness, like the utterances of Lord Emsworth and Bingo Little. But not quite.

It's a tuneless hymn to snobbery. "Venice Skye" is beautiful, posh and sociable; and her sister "Alabama Skye" is beautiful, posh and brilliant, the best young playwright. The plot consists of Venice temporarily pretending to be cultured and Alabama temporarily pretending to be a party-girl, in order to attract the different boyfriends they want. Role reversal!

As the nauseating book-jacket puts it, "When Venice takes to reading the *Spectator* and quoting James Joyce, and Alabama starts wearing St Laurent to the manner born and holding court in unaccustomed splendour, *le tout Londres* is amazed and amused. What *can* those dazzling Skye girls be up to? Could it possibly, just possibly, have anything to do with love?"

This gasping tone of auto-sycophancy is maintained throughout. "They roared away down the M4, leaving London talking nineteen to the dozen in their wake." "The day after the party saw everyone reaching for their [sic] telephones". "She wore a perfectly cut, perfectly simple black coat and skirt, St Laurent's latest creation as only he knew how, the one that every woman worth her salt in London had been lusting after for the last month." This fantasy that London is inhabited only be a tiny glob of nobs is essential to Tania Kindersley and her kind.

The poor are there only to be devastated by patronage. "Alabama surveyed her wardrobe, shaking her head... She bundled the lot over her arm, and took them to Oxfam, who almost fainted at the sight of half this season's Paris collections being dumped unceremoniously on their doorstep. 'Well,' said Alabama to the astonished assistant, 'that should feed a few babies, at least'."

Inside the bubble, being "deliciously witty" goes like this: "He thought Chanel was something they were trying to build a tunnel under."

"Oliver had the ability to make the bubonic plague seem a rather amusing trifle of gossip." "Well darling," said Venice, who thought feminism was a type of sanitary towel, "I'll tell you something for free. It never did a girl any good to let on that she has more than half a brain." There is little danger of that troubling Tania Kindersley.

Conceivably she believes the book to be mildly satirical of its characters. But it could have been written by one of them, it *has* been written by one of them. The illiterate prose, with its wretched "to die fors" and "darlings", has no distance from what it describes. "Alabama had taken her platinum locks off her face, to reveal her dangerous eyes, outlined in kohl. Her mouth was a wanton red, perfectly painted, setting off those startling bones. Her endless legs were clothed in sheer black stockings, and her shoes were suede." This is simply drooling of the glossies, imperfectly aped.

Why has Kindersley written the book? Because it's smart to be known to have written a book. One of her characters is said to be "the latest literary sensation", his friends "all far too much flavour of the month at Hamish Hamilton or Deutsch". Alabama is said to be popular with them — "the young literary bucks laughed delightedly at her sallies, and fought, in spite of themselves, to light her cigarette."

That the novel is no good doesn't matter because the people it is aimed at are incapable of reading it or anything else longer than a menu. Even if they could, they'd not understand that merely calling a book a novel doesn't make it a novel if the term is to have any value. So now Tania Kindersley is a novelist, although she knows as much about novel-writing as she does about Esperanto.

Why was it published? Because first novels normally sell such a small number of copies that anybody who has enough society friends to buy a few can be a good prospect for a snobbish publisher.

Another moronic toff, Simon Sebag Montefiore, had a non-novel, *King's Parade*, out earlier this year from Hamish Hamilton (a firm specialising in such vanity publishing). The *Sunset Times* again made much of the occasion and reported that the novel was "a sell-out" because many of his acquaintances bought the book hoping to identify themselves in it. And Andrew Franklin, the Hamish Hamilton publishing director responsible, revealed that, apart from calling on family friends, "his mother went round London bookshops and said 'I am Simon Sebag Montefiore's mother, I will be coming back to see if you have given his book good space.' "

A few years ago all these sprigs were writing not novels but travel books about traipsing around Peru or Bhutan. In a way that was better. Apart from getting them out of the country for a while, there was at least a small chance of their meeting with a fatal accident.

Books & Bookmen

☐ WHAT difficulties Popeye's outfit seems to have been experiencing with its music list since musical editor Malcolm Garrett was made redundant some months ago.

First, Weidenfeld & Nicolson lost Sir Michael Tippett's autobiography, perhaps because it reveals more about his penile proclivities than anyone would want to know. To compensate, it signed up, "for an arm and a leg", not the Fat Man of Opera to write his autobiography, but she who makes him his pasta, Senora Pavarotti. She'll reveal, I don't believe, what goes on behind the scenes.

There's trouble, too, with Daniel Barenboim's autobiography. He insisted on writing it in German although he could, of course, have done it in English. Then it was execrably translated into American English and had to be rewritten. Fans may be surprised that Jacqueline du Pre is only mentioned on two pages.

■ THOMAS Harris's *The Silence of the Lambs* has sold an astonishing 900,000 copies in its Mandarin paperback edition.

It's remarkable how many people in Retread House are claiming credit for having signed up the book. *Publishing News*'s "Editor of the Year", decent Dan Franklin, is clearly feeling insecure in the present Octopus regime as he is claiming to have bought the book. In fact it was brought in by his then boss Helen Fraser, who doesn't get much credit for anything these days.

Franklin thinks that he bought *Chaos*, too; but it was secured by gorgeous pouting Fraser's predecessor, Brian Perman. Franklin's two greatest "discoveries" — Bill Bryson's *Lost Continent* and Roddy Doyle's *Commitments* — were plucked from the slush pile by another former colleague, Heather Godwin, who happens to be the wife of Franklin's predecessor, David "Boy" Godwin.

☐ *SONIA LAND is indignant at suggestions that her beloved bamboo plants at HarperCollins' Bangkok House are dying because they aren't being watered. It is the nature of the "water" which is killing them, she says.*

The reason they are expiring, she insists to anyone who will listen, is that they are being "doused" by her hated successor, Eddie "Arturo" McBastard Bell, and by Terry Kitson.

'Bookworm'

Eurotunnel

Safety belt-up

BRITISH RAIL let it be known, as Parliament approached its summer recess, that a decision would at long last be taken by the Cabinet on the route for its high-speed rail link between the Channel Tunnel and London — and some newspapers and TV programmes believed it.

They would have done better to believe *Private Eye*. We told them that the Government would not be so damn silly as to announce any more bad news before a general election and the Government duly announced on 19 July that a decision on the longest-ever display of official funk would be "deferred until the autumn at the earliest".

Lurking in the background to all this is Eurotunnel, the biggest civil engineering project in the world, and set fair to become the biggest cock-up. It has never welcomed publicity, which was usually bad, and is now basking in the glow of silence after achieving a breakthrough in the service tunnel. It is in particular delighted that no word has leaked out about the three safety issues on which it is still at loggerheads with the Anglo-French Safety Authority.

There has been a blanket of secrecy over the discussions because, as is frankly admitted in Whitehall, the British have to go along with the French who are under no pressure from their own public and feel no need to issue regular releases of information. So silence reigns. The last public release from the Safety Authority was its annual report in January for the year ending March 1990 and it recorded that there was still no agreement with Eurotunnel on the seismic risk.

A civil engineer, or even an innocent observer, might think that before a tunnel was even started there would have to be agreement about the design needed to withstand an earthquake. But today, 15 months after the period covered by the report, the Department of Transport confirmed that the issue is still "under consideration". The spokesman said the tunnel "cannot open until this matter is resolved".

He also confirmed that two other serious issues have yet to be resolved: staffing levels and whether cars and coaches need to be clamped into place. The leading objector on safety grounds is Dr Herbert Eisner, former director of the Government's Explosion and Flame Laboratory. He has concentrated on these three issues as being vital to the future of the tunnel. He notes that Eurotunnel wants six staff per train, including the driver. Each train would have 26 wagons, half of them double- deckers, carrying 260 cars. One of the staff is required to sit in front of a closed circuit TV screen, leaving only four staff patrolling to keep watch for people leaving their vehicles to stretch their legs, smoke or fool around. "That, in my view, is not enough." Evidently the Safety Authority shares his concern as that is another matter on which there is still no agreement.

The third problem is the most serious from Eurotunnel's point of view. "Eurotunnel said that cars can simply be driven on to the wagon and put in gear, with the handbrake on, and this would be sufficient to stop them careering into one another, even if there was a collision," said Dr Eisner. "Now the Safety Authority insists that the cars have to be located securely on the floor, which means they will either have to have the wheels clamped to the floor, or the wheels must be located in small depressions so that they can't slide out and this is one of the things which would make the wagons more expensive." Agreement has still not been reached on this issue, either.

Another critic is Dr John Owen, an organic chemist and holder of the Freedom of Information Award, who believes that the only safe way to run the tunnel will be without the shuttle trains which passengers can join with their cars in Folkestone and Calais. He argues that at peak times the tunnel will contain 12,000 people and 40,000 gallons of petrol if cars are allowed. He believes cars should be carried, as at present, on the ferries and that the tunnel should be confined to foot passengers and freight. Even then the lorry drivers should be separated from their vehicles, as they are on cross-Channel ferries. "You will then have a Channel tunnel that is much safer."

Dr Eisner supports him and argues that allowing passengers to sit in their cars is only wanted by Eurotunnel to ensure "rapid train turnround and consequent high revenue forecasts".

Money is of course the clue to the arguments now raging between the Safety Authority and Eurotunnel. The tunnel is bumping up against what the City regards as its upper limit for finance (£8.5 billion) if it is to avoid the Humber Bridge trap — the point at which receipts, even on favourable Eurotunnel estimates, would always be less than the interest payments due.

Whichever way the safety issues are decided, there is no conceivable need to keep the discussions secret. The British members of the Safety Committee include distinguished civil servants who one day may have to answer to the public if accidents happen. The least that they can do, to protect themselves if nothing else, is to ensure that the public is told what is being decided. After all, nobody keeps good news secret.

Iraq's nuclear capability

US and them

THE URGENCY with which the United States government is trying to rid Iraq of any nuclear weapons capability no doubt owes much to the embarrassing fact that it almost certainly supplied the country with uranium-enriching hardware in the first place.

Confidential British government correspondence of 1955 confirms the existence of what was clearly a military nuclear agreement between Iraq (and others) and the western powers. A letter from the British embassy in Washington to the Foreign Office, dated 9 December 1955, spells this out in reporting American views on a plan to set up civil nuclear research centres in the countries involved.

The letter records that US State Department officials raised the point that "the Baghdad Pact was a military arrangement". Consequently they asked: "Did we feel any embarrassment at using such a context for assistance in the peaceful use of atomic energy?"

Another letter from the British embassy in Baghdad to the Foreign Office five days later notes that Iraqi students "are already under training" at the Argonne National Laboratory near Chicago — the leading US nuclear research facility.

There would have been some incentive to set up enrichment plants in countries where uranium could be mined as it would have saved the cost of shipping thousands of tonnes of ore half way around the world. However, it is equally possible that the prime motivation for the deal was to flog off a lot of obsolete equipment to vain Middle Eastern monarchs at top prices.

Either way, the pact would have been abandoned when the Ba'ath Party seized power. However, the Iraqis would still have had the enriching hardware to put to use, once they acquired supplies of uranium ore, either mined from their own mountains or bought from overseas.

The deal would explain why the present Iraqi programme to enrich uranium is using electromagnetic isotope separation in giant calutron machines, rather than the cheaper and faster gaseous diffusion method long since used in the West. (The US was using calutrons in the 1950s, and the UN inspection team that visited Iraq recently commented that the one plant they did see was almost identical to an American facility of that period.)

The Baghdad Pact would also explain how the Americans were able to declare with such certainty that Iraq had not disclosed the full extent of its nuclear operations. They would not have needed satellite or any other kind of espionage — they would simply have had to check off the Iraqi disclosures against the inventory of what had been supplied more than 30 years earlier.

Asbestos

Monk's dirty habits

TRAFALGAR HOUSE, which has just taken over the ailing Davy Corporation, would be well advised to look closely at the track record of Monk Construction Ltd, one of the subsidiary civil engineering firms it now has the dubious privilege of owning.

Disturbing evidence has come to light that in the summer of last year Monk Construction was guilty of serious negligence at Paddington Station where it was in charge of restoring Brunel's famous roof to its former glory.

Commuters who learnt to live with the dusty renovation work above platforms seven and eight (next to the taxi rank and the Casey Jones snackerama) might be interested to know that on two separate occasions they were in danger of inhaling toxic asbestos fibre.

Monk appointed Associated Metal Coatings (AMC) Ltd at the end of 1989 to blast off the old Victorian paint from the iron girders above the station concourse. Blasting is a dangerous job and health and safety rules require that adequate "protection" (hardboard, felt etc) be installed to seal off the area from passers by — in this case hapless commuters and Post Office workers below.

Before AMC set to work, it was told by Monk that there was a possibility of asbestos packing in some of the iron joints. (British Rail had stated in its original contract that asbestos was present and would have to be removed as part of the job.) In particular, AMC was not to blast the valley girders until all the joints had been checked. The all-clear, however, was given in June 1990: the packing between the joints was reported to be oak throughout.

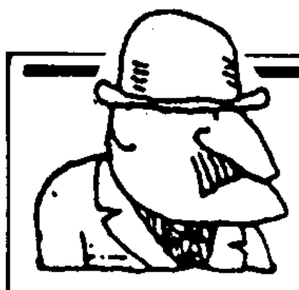
It came as something of a shock then, when the dust from one of AMC's blasters suddenly billowed out into a fine white cloud. The operator had struck asbestos, inert when its undisturbed, lethal when blasted. AMC stopped work immediately, for the sake of their workforce and the public below.

As one site worker commented: "The protection was of a standard adequate to resist grit. But it was never designed for asbestos fibre. Let's face it, no one expected it to be there."

Photographs reveal that the so-called protection sealing off the work was often poorly maintained and torn. On many occasions, it couldn't even contain the grit, let alone fine asbestos fibre.

On discovering the asbestos, AMC reported the incident to Monk, who called in Abastra Ltd of Wimbledon, a company specialising in the removal of asbestos. Two sections were taken away with extreme caution. (Why hadn't they been discovered in Monk's original survey?) Monk then told British Rail that all the asbestos had been cleared and AMC duly commenced work again two weeks later. To their astonishment, the blasters struck asbestos *for the second time*, at exactly the same spot.

Monk was duly informed and Abastra summoned to remove two more pieces. Monk would not tell AMC what type of asbestos it was; it simply announced that air samples had been taken and the levels were safe. How fortunate it hadn't been able to take any readings during the accidental blasting.



In the City

"If we closed down a bank every time we had a fraud, we would have rather fewer banks than we have" – *Robin Leigh-Pemberton, Governor of the Bank of England. 23 July.*

"The Bank of England had been aware of accusations against BCCI of a range of irregularities, including money laundering, tax evasion and maintaining terrorist accounts. However, none of these was justification for closing it down" — *Leigh-Pemberton's testimony to the Commons Treasury Committee.*

"The integrity element of the criterion requires the institution to observe high ethical standards in carrying on its business. Criminal offences or other breaches of statute will obviously call into question the fulfilment of this criterion... Doubts may also be raised if the institution fails to comply with recognised ethical standards of conduct" — *Banking Act, 1987, Statement of Principles, Schedule 3.*

"The Bank's powers [to revoke authorisation] become exercisable if it appears to the Bank that any of the criteria in Schedule 3 is not or has not been fulfilled" — *Banking Act Statement of Principles, Schedule 11.*

GIVEN what the Bank of England — by its governor's own admission last week — knew about the Bank of Crooks & Cocaine International from at least 1988 when it was indicted for drug money laundering, it is even harder to understand exactly what is required to lose a banking licence here if the bank concerned is as well connected as BCCI. Certainly money laundering, tax evasion and having terrorists and drug traffickers for customers did not seem to count, either individually or together.

Leigh-Pemberton's admissions only encourage suspicions that the Bank of England always looked for soft options when dealing with BCCI until these ran out and it was presented with "overwhelming" evidence of "massive and widespread fraud going back over a number of years".

So long as senior management denied or could not be tied to illegalities, their word was preferred over the facts and allegations to the contrary — facts and allegations which indicated the truth of what Leigh-Pemberton now belatedly accepts: "The culture of the bank is criminal."

Instead from January last year the Bank of England chose first to try tighter supervision, then to call on Sheikh Zayed to open Abu Dhabi's cheque book, then to remove the Abedi/Naqvi clique of crooks and finally to go back to the Sheikh again.

As to Abu Nidal, the Bank was prepared to be a "team player" and go along with what the "spooks" wanted: that the accounts should continue to be operated and thereby monitored. Just what that achieved is hard to see, except to keep the Abu Nidal organisation in its deadly business with British help.

It is interesting to compare the response of Florida's Comptroller Gerald Lewis when pressured by the US Justice Department not to close BCCI, after it pleaded guilty to money laundering in 1990, because it was being used for covert operations. Lewis rejected these suggestions and closed the bank down in Florida. Unlike Leigh-Pemberton, he clearly felt no other course was publicly acceptable.

The Abu Nidal affair, like that in Florida, strengthens the argument that BCCI was treated differently because of its political connections, both public and private. It is hard to believe any other bank with so many strikes against it would have been given chance after chance.

But with Saddam Hussein on the march last August and the Gulf inflamed, then was not the time to be angering "our friends" in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Saudi Arabia (three members of the ruling family, including the powerful interior minister Prince Naif, were shareholders). Of course by last month the need to keep the Arabs sweet was no longer item one on the political agendas of either the Foreign Office or the US State Department. And, after all, as Leigh-Pemberton so amusingly remarked the day he pulled the plug on BCCI, the losers were "ethnic depositors".

BCCI bulletins:

● *The Guardian* has been one of the more aggressive pursuers of the BCCI scandal. But it was not always anti-BCCI. From 1978 to 1980 it was the partner of Abedi's close associate Altaf Gauhar, funded by BCCI, in producing its Third World Review.

● "Our balance sheet is strong and consistent with previous balance sheets... The operations of the bank are conducted within the legal framework in each country and in compliance with the regulatory requirements" — *Naqvi interview, Arab Banker, 1989.*

● BCCI is not the first time Sheikh Zayed has been ripped off by his own advisers who — surprise, surprise, it now emerges — were hand in bank account with the Abedi/Naqvi clique. Nine years ago the Sheikh lost $96 million on commodity deals handled by another Pakistani, Riaz Saleem Aslam. Zayed sued in the US while his lawyers talked of "fraudulent transactions". Aslam was quickly arrested. Naqvi and the other BCCI crooks continue to walk the Gulf streets with both hands.

POLLY PECK'S Asil Nadir has raised the stakes in the game of legal poker being played behind the scenes over his prosecution on theft and fraud charges.

The appearance last month of the Binder Hamlyn report allegedly accounting for the £25 million Nadir is charged with misappropriating is said to have thrown the Serious Fraud Office into a temporary crisis of self-doubt.

The impact has been probably to delay for some time, until the documents supporting Nadir's claim have been corroborated, the anticipated further charges against Nadir raising the alleged theft to nearer £100 million.

It may also put the SFO under pressure regarding Nadir's game plan of seeking permission to have his passport returned and with it the right to travel to Turkey and Northern Cyprus. Such travel would of course only be in order to help the Polly Peck administrators, whose access to Northern Cyprus has been extremely limited nine months after their appointment.

The problem for the SFO in resisting such an application — likely to be made at Nadir's bail hearing on August 1 — is that obtaining evidence or witnesses from Northern Cyprus is very difficult legally because Britain does not recognise the Turkish enclave. How could any documents from there be proved in a British court? Would statements from witnesses taken there be valid — especially as there would be no power to compel such witnesses to testify in Britain? What would happen if Nadir, once there, was unable to return?

The appearance of the Binder Hamlyn report follows negotiations with the administrators carried out by Nadir's local lawyer, Mentes Aziz, who has made a number of visits to London following his arrest with Nadir last December. Aziz has been trying to cut a deal with the administrators. Not surprising as he not only represented Nadir and his mother — the supposed source of the millions in Nadir's Cyprus bank which he withdrew in London and Jersey (how the wife of a small-time rag trade operator had so many millions — the big figure could be £100 million — is another mystery) — but was also personally involved in certain key transactions as both lawyer and director of the local companies. He is also a close associate of the Turkish-Cypriot leader Rauf Denktash.

The administrators, who want access to the secrets of Northern Cyprus plus whatever assets are there, have been keen to do a deal with Aziz. This has not pleased the SFO, which sees a move that could put the administrators into the position of being witnesses for the defence, not the prosecution.

Whether the SFO's nerve will hold remains to be seen. But after several months on the offensive it seems the surprise Nadir counterattacks may have for the moment put it on the defensive.

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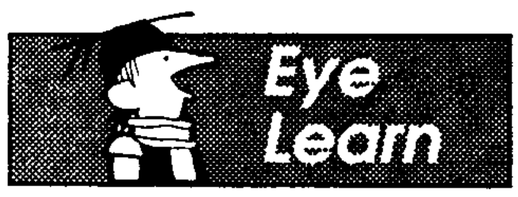

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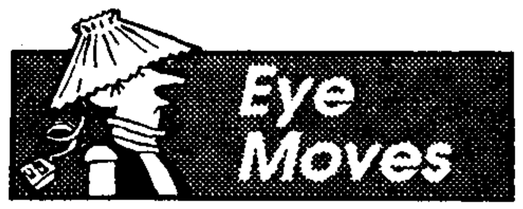

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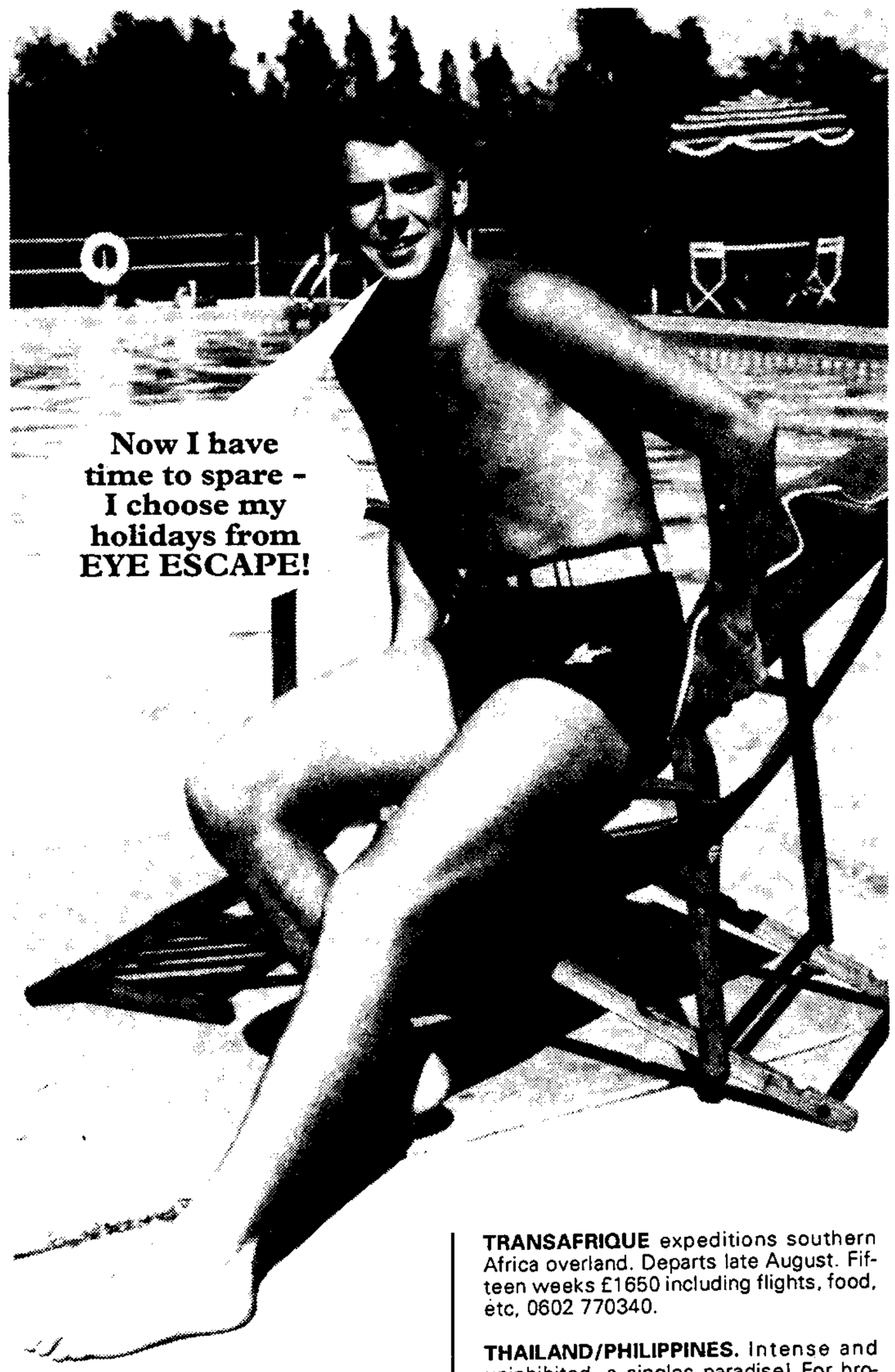

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IMPORTANT [!!?] constitutional law project seeks sponsors. £1 plus A5 SAE for info. Box 0873.

LET LOVE CONQUER ALL 12,000 miles. £1,700. Please help with gifts or loans. Ralph. 081-802 5426.

MATURE LAW STUDENT needs £50 to £5,000. Box 11873.

FAIRY GODPERSON desperately needed. £10,000 will remove my daughter's anxieties and restore her to health and her career. Repayment guaranteed. Full details to genuine replies. Box 11973.

PLEASE SUPPORT Romanian filmmaker finance first year of National Film School (Beaconsfield). Need contributions towards £10,000. Details available. Box 12073.

BELIZE REEF — Graduate asking for sponsorship funds. Please help. Send any contribution, made out to "CORAL CAY" to enable me to participate in conservation and marine ecology expedition. Thank you. Box 12173.

FEMALE DRAMA STUDENT accepted two schools. Refused grant. Seeking sponsorship to £15,000. Repaid if possible. Desperate. Details. Box 12273.

I'M GOING TO save the world. Can you save me financially? Box 2073.

LAST RESORT. Need £2,000 will repay. Explanation if necessary. Box 2173.

UNFINANCED VET student desperately needs funds. Please help. Genuine. Box 2273.

MEDICAL STUDENT urgently requires personal loan of £5,000 or donations for living expenses during final year. Mr Wood. Box 2373.

YOUNG COUPLE WITH toddler wish to live as organic farmers in France. Box 2473.

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TWO PHILANTHROPISTS in need of philanthropy. £1,500 debt. Very genuine. Any donations appreciated. Box 2873.

YOUNG SCULPTOR, anti-pseud needs funds to continue. Edinburgh. Box 2973.

I DESPERATELY need cash to get business off ground. Please help. Genuine. Box 3073.

STARVING PETS: Financial relief needed. Please help. Box 3173.

£6,000 URGENTLY required to join fiancee in Australia. Anything considered. Thank you. Box 3273.

LEAFLET PRODUCING Lidden needs your £1. Box 3373.

MAN NEEDS £6,000 to stop debts from killing him. Please help. Anything considered. Box 3473.

£1,300 IN DEBT due to own stupidity. Struggling to make interest payments. Any donations made payable to Barclaycard. Box 3573.

MUSICIANS' COLLECTIVE need rent. Box 3673.

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WIDOW WITH handicapped son desperately needs £3,000. Please help "MARY". Box 3873.

TRAINEE SOLICITOR, impoverished by funding study, needs £2,000 to pay debts. Box 3973.

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PENPALS WORLDWIDE for interesting correspondence, lasting friendships, maybe more. Details and sample photos free! HERMES Korrespondenz-Verlag, Box 110660/S, Berlin 11, Germany.

PENFRIENDS — USA. Make lasting friendships through correspondence. Send age, interests. Free reply. HARMONY, Box 82295PE, Phoenix, Arizona 85071, USA.

RARE CHANCE TO obtain low mileage classic. 1961 model, 6'2", solid, not flash, good on or off road, but no service history, battery flat. Gentle woman driver 22-26 with jump leads and patience needed. Photo please. Box 6273.

WORKING TOO HARD? Attractive woman (29) plus dog. Looking for company and some fun in Yorkshire/Humberside. Box 6473.

AMUSING, EASY GOING, genuine, independent, professional woman, seeks 6' man, 37+, N/S within 3 hours London, but mostly optimistic outlook and sense of humour. Be positive. Write! Box 6573.

A FLAWED MASTERPIECE but a different kind of man. Romantic but fun. Goodlooking but loyal. 31 but getting younger. Professional but laid-back. Just arrived in England. Needs non-uptight girlfriend with at least some vices. Swap photos? Go on! Take a chance. I won't bite you. Box 6673.

BACK TO THE FUTURE
Loving, loyal woman, 47, intelligent, attractive, sense of fun. Enjoys sex. Available for marriage. N/S.
Box 6373.

GELDOF-CLEESE CROSS. 32 and hunky seeks younger, Southern girl. Photo appreciated. Box 6773.

CARING HEDONIST seeks lady to love, 21-35, independent, active. Me: 26, 6'2", M.A. ALA. Box 6873.

PROFESSIONAL MALE unexpectedly back on the market. 6'1" tall, late 20s, romantic, fit, quite intelligent, solvent, country loving, seeks caring non-smoking female for friendship/possible relationship. Oxford area. All letters answered. Box 4173.

BEAUTIFUL, INTELLIGENT young lady wishes to meet sophisticated, successful businessman over 50 for discreet, uncomplicated affair. Box 4273.

UNUSUAL GOODLOOKING woman, can be overbearing, 56, seeks compatible, financially secure man, 50-58 for permanent relationship. Photo required. Box 4373.

ROMEO WHEREFORE art thou? Juliet, 30, attractive, intelligent, seeks caring, romantic and considers this more effective than shouting from a balcony. SE/London. Photo appreciated. Box 4473.

CHERYL: You did not give a phone number. Please write. Box 4573.

HAPPY, ATTRACTIVE girl (29) bright and slightly unconventional, fed-up with bores and bullshit, seeks similar London-based chap, ~~28~~ 39 for vodka, laughs and whatever. No weirdos or extremities please. Box 4673.

INTELLIGENT, passionate man seeks wild fling with warm, witty woman. Discreet if need be. Photo please. Box 4773.

FANCY PAXOS 9-23 September? Presentable and civilised chap, young 44, has spare ticket and would welcome company of slim adventuress, following exchange of photos and meeting. Sexual favours not part of deal. Richard Lindley, 17 Clarence Street, Staines, TW18 4SU.

COMPANY DIRECTOR, late 40s, reasonably attractive, reasonably bright, reasonably fit seeks lady reasonably similar, 30+ for theatre, concerts, dining and anything reasonable. London-Cardiff M4 corridor. Box 4873.

OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITY for female for first use of mid-20s male who (wrongly) thought he was unattractive. Large sense of humour, genuine, intelligent, lacks confidence but working on it. Personality important, age not. Reply guaranteed. Box 4973.

AFFAIR WANTED by company director, 33, male, intelligent, attractive, interesting, charming etc. If you are a similar lady, 20-35 and think this sounds too good to be actually true, why not judge for yourself? Oxon. Please send photo. Box 5073.

GENUINE, CARING male, professional, new to London seeks sincere, attractive female for nights out and friendship. Box 5173.

JERSEY-BASED single female, 25, 5'6", blonde, attractive and well educated loves music, sailing, theatre, country life, seeks professional, sincere man for genuine friendship. Box 5273.

LOVELY, NATURAL blonde lady: spirited, intelligent, affectionate, independent, slim, striking. Seeks Mr Right: 6'1"ish, handsome, fit, educated, confident, 27-35 to share passion, adventure, success, love, friendship, life. Photo please. Box 5373.

EAST ANGLIAN EVE seeks Adam (Guardian model). Pretty, literary woman, early 40s with high cuddling potential, offers apple to bright, funny, warm-hearted man with daft grin. No snakes please. My photo for yours. Box 5473.

OXFORD-BASED MALE, late forties, tall, slim, attractive, extrovert, intelligent, seeks similar located, slim, attractive, thirties female to join him on a travelling adventure commencing 1992 for a year, possibly two. Must have no ties, Your letter and photo for mine. Box 5573.

OXFORD. TALL, literary, attractive female (40s) seeks unattached, humorous male, hopefully with Christian and Green values. Box 5673.

HUGGABLE, ATTRACTIVE male, 28, liked by most women as a friend, would love to be unashamedly fancied for once. Letter please. London. Box 5773.

WELL PRESENTED graduate lawyer, thirties, seeks younger beauty for love. Yorks based photo please. ALA. Box 5873.

RICHARD. TALL, 33, single, professional man, based in West Yorkshire, is looking for that special lady who can show that there's more to life than work. Recent photo and phone number appreciated. Box 5973.

KENT: ATTRACTIVE, caring female graduate, (29, 5'4") seeks goodhumoured, professional, own home. Box 6073.

EASYGOING, GOODLOOKING male, 32, seeks calm, pleasant lady for dalliance. Bristol area. Reply promised. Box 6173.

SINCERE BUSINESSMAN (32) seeks intelligent, attractive young lady, 28ish, to romance and send roses to. Photo appreciated. E. Mids/anywhere. Box 6973.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, 40, has superb rent-free London flat for sensuous lady. 081-444 8950.

ATTRACTIVE, PROFESSIONAL man, 42, London, seeks intelligent, elegant, music-loving lady, early thirties for discreet affair. Box 7073.

TALL, CONSIDERATE gentleman, 30s, seeks sexy older lady (40s/50s) for very discreet relationship. London. Box 7173.

MA LARKIN, 40-N/W requires a funny man, 35-45ish. Box 7273.

ELIGIBLE BACHELOR of science (30) own business. Into flying unicycles and chocolate milkshakes. Seeks independent woman with brains and sense of humour. Box 7373.

FEMALE, 17-21, reasonably attractive, intelligent, sought by similar male, 21. Thames Valley. Send letter, photo. Box 7473.

AUSTRALIAN LADY. Strikingly unforgettable, is alone in London but looking for a tall, charming, intelligent male in his 30s for good times. Photo/phone. Box 7573.

LAWYER, 40, MALE, tall, slim, brown hair, eyes. Married. Seeks mutually stimulating affair with special married lady. London/Essex. Box 7673.

MANCHESTER YOSSARIAN seeks nurse Duckett. No catch. Box 7773.

W. YORKS/NORTH. Unattached man, 34, attractive, 6' tall, well-educated, well-spoken, needs older woman for passionate summer. Box 7873.

PROFESSIONAL, CARING, attractive, romantic, Christian divorcee seeks similar tall, gentleman, age 55-65, for lifelong relationship. Photograph appreciated. Box 7973.

HAMPSTEAD MAN, 46, own business, seeks woman, 30-40 for longterm relationship. Children welcomed. Photo appreciated. Box 8073.

GENTLEMAN, 45, seeking lady friend to share walks, talks and fun with. Box 8173.

I'M SEEKING TALL-ISH 50-ish cleverish, affluent-ish fella to make life sparkle again. Letter/photo please. N.W./Midlands. Box 8273.

OFFSHORE "TIGGER" seeks onshore kitten for fun and laughs. Edinburgh. Box 8373.

ANYONE THERE? Interested in the good life on remote smallholding? Attractive, intelligent lady sought by bearded, creative, outdoor type. (43) for mutual back scratching and occasional forays into the bright lights. Box 8473.

EDUCATED, VERY GOOD looking, slim, divorced, 46, country house, seeks slim and beautiful lady, 25-40, for mutually pleasing, sexy times etc. Discretion assured. Photo please. Leicestershire. Box 8573.

DECENT MAN seeks similar woman for lasting romance. Me: tall, fit, 30, graduate. Interests include loud music, wild shirts, powerful films, silly games, serious drinking. You: how the hell should I know? Box 8673.

PROFESSIONAL MAN, unattached, early 40s without happiness, seeks attractive lady, 25-35 (but age unimportant) for outings, drinking, dining etc. Photo will elicit response. North East preferred. Box 8773.

CARING, ATTRACTIVE, single man, 30/45, sought by warm, funny, single mum (lecturer) to share obsessions with fun, France, food and painting. S. Wales/West. Photo? Box 8873.

NORWICH: INTERESTING, attractive woman, 42, seeks tall, warm, witty man, unattached N/S and under 50. ONO. Box 9473.

SPECIAL OFFER!!! Slim, tallish, personable, amusing, imaginative, perceptive, enthusiastic, upmarket woman, early 40s, recession afflicted, needs genuinely successful, affectionate, generous, honourable man. Box 9573.

TALL, SLIM, ATTRACTIVE, socialist man, 38, independent, interested in sharing culture and laughter with similar woman. Yorkshire/Humberside. Box 9673.

PLEASE BUGGER OFF/ If chasing gold,/I have no Porsche/You should be told./But if I your pup,/I'd piss puddles,/if your teddy bear/give lots of cuddles./So girlies, girlies/If heart is free/I'm 29,/Live London SE. Box 9373.

OXFORD COMPUTING student, 20, seeks similarly bright, clean living, humorous, healthy young woman to share country walks, gentle conversation and life. Box 9073.

SLIM 20 YEAR OLD brunette seeks kind, solvent, intellectual gentleman, view marriage. ALA. Photo appreciated. Based Mid Anglia. Box 9173.

TALL, HANDSOME, gentleman, 31, public-school, Cambridge type, international lawyer, seeks healthy blonde, 18-24 (send photo). Box 9273.

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Eye Love Reader

PROFESSIONAL CONTINENTAL female, 33, married, good looking, wishes to meet attractive and interesting male for discreet affair. North London area. Box 8973.

CHATOYANT MALE, 30, probes London for inquiet, sensate woman with spice but not rancour. Synergy sought through articulation, caprice and sagacity. The fatigued, abject or fastidious, discouraged Box 9773.

SLIGHTLY ECCENTRIC, professional man, 36, living South Wiltshire, working London, on verge of insanity but solvent, needs rescuing by lovely lady prepared to share his life, bed, thatched cottage, and passion for beautiful cars. Box 9873.

TWO BOZOS NEED good rogering. Photo appreciated. Box 9973.

FEMALE ADVENTURESS seeks warm, loving man for fun and fortune in foreign parts. S.E. Kent. Box 10073.

WIDOW, EARLY 40s, positive, optimistic, normal, intelligent, but not intellectual, seeks simple, uncomplicated, monogamous relationship with outgoing, caring, creative, yet practical man who would enjoy being spoilt and enjoy spoiling me. Box 10173.

MID-KENT, ATTRACTIVE, professional male, 38, 5'10", slim, single, Guardian reader, aging hippy (doesn't show). Seeks female companion. Photo appreciated. Box 10273.

BALDRICK PUSSYCAT'S looking for a girlie for his dad (25), who's a N/S Lefty lecturer who could do with a few long term cuddles not far from Brummieland. Box 10373.

35 AND NEVER been a toyboy! Tall, slim, blue-eyed, romantic, seeks stylish, fiftyish lady to wine and dine. Go on, spoil yourself! Box 10473.

VIVACIOUS, ATTRACTIVE lady graduate, 30, seeks special man for love and laughter. Photo appreciated. London/South East. Box 10573.

BIG BROWN EYES slimming figure, gentle smile, intelligent, feminine, 34, married, lonely wants to meet slim, witty, solvent male for theatre, music, films, special times. Newcastle-Upon-Tyne area. Box 10673.

PRETTY, WITTY, tall brunette, 37, creative and articulate seeks TLC and ££s, possibly forever. Box 10773.

GENEROUS, SLIM, 40s, prof. male seeks joyful interludes, friendship outings with discreet, vivacious 25-40 female. Midlands/anywhere. Box 10873.

LADY, EXTREMELY unhappy in relationship, caught up in vicious web looking for relationship with any upmarket, educated, professional man. Discretion assured and would appreciate the same in return. Box 1372.

HONG KONG, an Englishman abroad. 34, own company, trying to heal a broken heart, needs a little bit of home to make life perfect again. You are under 35, attractive, slim, adventurous. The right reply receives return air ticket to Hong Kong. Photo and phone number ensures reply. Box 11073.

MALE STUDENT 24, 5'10", slim build, N/S, who's quite attractive, shy, not into discos, likes sport, country. I'm honest, loyal gentle, seek affectionate, caring female (20-50) for lovemaking, and intimate friendship, discretion if necessary. Dundee/Edinburgh/anywhere. Please write. Box 12373.

TALL, PROFESSIONAL male, slim, youthful, 50, seeks caring, educated, slimish lady, early thirties. London. Box 12473.

AL PACINO LOOKALIKE (almost) seeks woman for voyage on the sea of love. Age immaterial. Photo appreciated. North London/Europe. Box 12573.

WRITER/ACTRESS. SW London. Fond of France, walks, snow, New Year's in Paris? Seeks brainy, creative, literate, affectionate London man, 38-45, to walk the dog. Photo please. Box 10072.

LONDON MALE (41) passionate, likes travel, cinema and cooking. Seeks dream woman. Photo please. Box 9270.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 37, slim, presentable, deeply interested in cinema, twentieth century art, ideas, seeks intellectual woman with similar leanings for restaurants, trivial conversation and the occasional dose of high culture. North West. Box 7472.

N.W. KENT. Hedonist, 32, neglected, seeks lady, 25-50 for torrid, surreptitious TLC and discreet illicit dining. Box 11373.

SHY STUDENT (19) seeks Mrs Robinson (22+). S.E. Photo please. Box 11173.

SENSITIVE, SENSUAL, professional man, 39, feeling sorry for himself — becoming single again! Intelligent, witty, articulate, tall, slim, sexy green eyes, good looking, good in bed, so I'm told! London based but absolutely adores the country, seeking compatible N/S female who does not want a meal ticket, but does want warmth, laughter and sincerity in her life with someone who has so much to give. If YOU are frustrated with the men you meet (or are not meeting) then please reply — photo appreciated. Box 11273.

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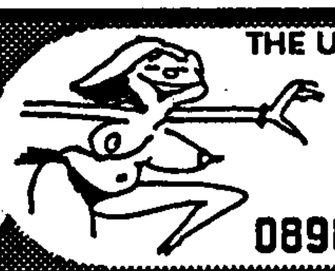

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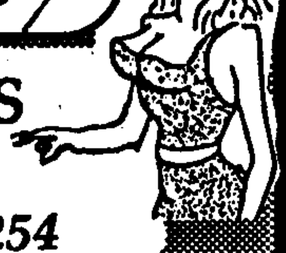

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